

# THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

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## Format and Reading Appreciation

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THE WORK OF the Textbook Clinic of the American Institute of Graphic Arts and the attention given by educators and others to the Clinic's traveling exhibit, "The Sixty Textbooks of the Year," have served to increase interest in the well-designed textbook and have started a flood of comments and questions among school people in relation to that subject.

With embarrassment inspired by my own limited knowledge, but with the feeling—inherent in every teacher—that questions must be answered, I proceed herewith to rush in where angels fear to tread. That is, I propose to answer as best I can some of the questions most commonly asked.

Here is a question often heard and far from easy to answer: *To what extent is the child's appreciation of what he reads influenced by the format of his book?*

I don't know. Neither does anyone else. But these things I do know: He is more likely to pick up a book with interest if the cover is of a color that he likes, if the cover design is attractive and sug-

gestive of an interesting content, if the name of the book and the name of the author are pleasantly legible.

He will probably examine the book a little longer—a little more patiently—if it will lie open on the table before him than he will if it pops shut whenever he removes a restraining hand.

If the print is very fine, if the lines are over-long, if the leading (space between the lines) is very limited, he is likely to feel tired suddenly and push the book aside for something else. It is his eyes that are tired, but he feels merely that the book has suddenly flagged in interest. Despite the varied opinions of experts on legibility, he seems to prefer a fairly large type. Given two books with type of equal size, he prefers the one that is well leaded to the one with little space between the lines.

He likes, apparently, rather large pictures better than small ones and likes those that add to his understanding of the book better than those that are planned

\*Author of textbooks and other juvenile material, and member of the Textbook Clinic. This article is, with some modifications, one that was presented at a meeting of The National Conference on Research in English at St. Louis in February, 1940.

with the major purpose of adding grace to the design. His interest in decoration will develop with training; but, in the early stages, he likes the characters and the inanimate objects in pictures to look as he thinks they should look.

Pleasing format may not have much to do with the child's reading appreciation, once he is well started in his book and deeply interested; but, as I have tried to show, it is important in getting him started and in keeping him reading up to the point where interest in the content will carry him along. It is important, also, in helping to establish standards by which he may recognize and appreciate good design. In other words, frequent contact with attractive—not necessarily expensive—books will help, in conjunction, we hope, with many other factors, to nourish the sense of beauty which is latent in us all and which must be fed in childhood if it is not to die of attrition.

If it is granted that the well-designed book, as such, contributes something to the child's development, the question arises to those untrained in this field—*How are we to recognize the book of good design—what are its characteristics?*

If a book is comfortable to hold, pleasant to look at, and easy to read, and if it is still intact after a good many people have absorbed its contents, it is probably a well-designed and well-made book. However it will do no harm to indulge in a little analysis to see what makes it pleasant to look at, comfortable to hold, easy to read, and durable.

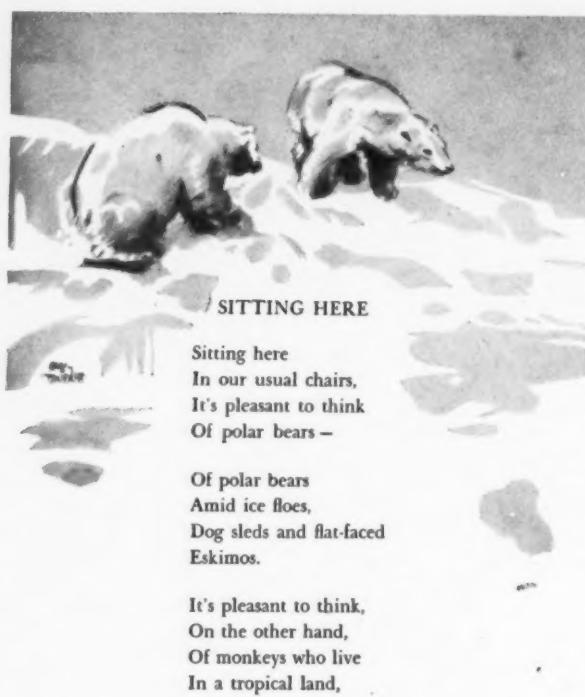
On the score of durability, this question sometimes arises: *Isn't the book that pops shut likely to be more strongly bound than the one that opens flat?*

The contrary is true. When a book has to be held open forcibly, the sewing that restrains it is likely to break—is sure to break sooner or later.

This breaking greatly weakens the book. The type of binding that permits the comfortable opening of the book is more durable in the long run.

As to comfortable holding of the book for ease of reading, we know at least that the margin should be wide enough to keep the reader's thumb from obscuring the type; but reference is often made to "well-proportioned margins." *What constitutes a well-proportioned margin?*

When a book is laid open flat on desk or table, the gutter margin (the combined



Margins nearest the binding) should, according to authorities in book-making—give the effect of being of the same width as the right-hand or the left-hand margin. The gutter margin is actually wider, however, because some of the width is taken up by the curve of the pages due to binding.

The right-hand and the left-hand margins should be wider than those at the tops of the pages and the margins at the bottoms of the pages should be widest of all. In considering these points, it should be remembered that the running head, unless it is continuously a very long one, is considered as being in the margin; it is not considered a part of the type page. A rule below the running head—if one is used—is regarded as being the top of the type page. In older books, pictures were usually kept within the space reserved for type so that the margins for pictures and type were the same. In many recently published books, however, the pictures extend to the edge of the page, with margins omitted. This is entirely permissible and is frequently very desirable since it makes possible larger and more effective illustrations. Decorations, also, may be used in the margins, provided they do not obscure the type.

One does not often find perfectly proportioned margins in textbooks below the college level. The low prices that must be set upon elementary and high school books make necessary a careful limitation of the amount of paper used in manufacturing. Then, too, the fact that textbooks must be capable of rebinding makes advisable a wider gutter margin than is likely to be desirable from the point of view of the designer.

Since, in the preceding discussion, numerous references have been made to the type page, the next question is, logic-

ally—*What are the characteristics of an attractive type page?*

It is generally conceded that the type page should take up about half the space occupied by the paper page on which the text appears and that the proportions of the two pages (the type page and the paper page) should be the same. Though modifications are possible and often desirable, the vertical position of the type page should, in general, be such that the type is centered on a line drawn diagonally from the inner top corner to the outer bottom corner of the paper page. (See illustration on page 216).

As far as ease of reading is concerned, it is advisable not to have a type page more than four inches wide and to lead between the lines with reasonable generosity. Such leading results also in a lighter and more inviting-looking page. The leading should always be in proportion to the type—the larger the type, the wider the leading. It is possible to have a leading so wide that it militates against legibility, but this defect is rare.

As to styles of type, textbooks until very recently tended to appear in Century, Binney, or Modern No. 8 with only a limited number of exceptions. This was to some extent due to inertia on the part of textbook publishers. It was also due to the fact that printers have had a tendency until recently not to carry complete fonts except in the types most commonly used. The types mentioned are all excellent on the score of legibility, but there are a good many others equally legible—and, for many purposes, more attractive—that are now coming into rather frequent use. This is in part a result of the greater interest the public is taking in well-designed textbooks. It is also, naturally, due in part to the intense competition that exists in the field of textbook selling. Baskerville, Electra, Granjon, and other

attractive types are seen more and more frequently and have brought a pleasing freshness to recent textbook exhibits.

The type used for the body of the book and that used for chapter titles and other headings should be in harmony. If the title page is hand lettered, the hand let-

*book may be effective parts of the whole?*

If a book has colored or decorated end Papers, these should harmonize in color and style with the cover of the book and with its illustrations. If the end papers are illustrated, the figures used should harmonize in style and size with those used in the illustrations. The design should suggest in some way the content of the book.

When line drawings are used within the book the artist should take into consideration the style of type with which they are to be associated. A heavier line should be used in relation to Century, which is a type with a dark, thick line, than is needed with such lighter types as Baskerville or Modern No. 8.

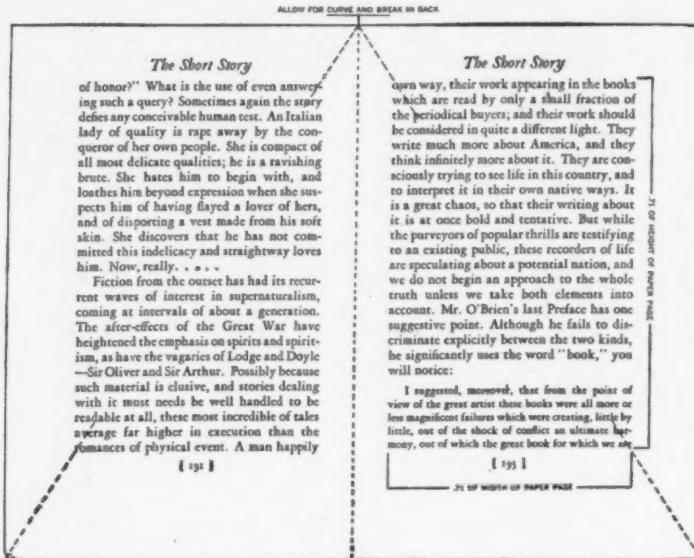
When the pictures do not extend into the margins, small cuts, less

From *A Manual of Style*. The University of Chicago Press, 1928.  
Used with permission.

tering should harmonize with the style of type used in the book. The title page of a textbook often presents a serious problem in design since the names of three or four authors may have to appear upon it and, not infrequently, the name of an artist as well. In such a situation, avoiding a cluttered look is difficult; but with care this can be achieved. In a recently published series of textbooks in elementary English, the extensive title-page material is spread over two facing pages with a most satisfactory resulting effect.

In any present-day book for children, pictures are an important feature. Hence, this question—*What points must be taken into consideration in order that the illustrations and decorations in a text-*

than the width of the page, should be located next to the outer margin. However if two small cuts have to appear on one page, one may be next the outer margin and one next the inner margin for the sake of balance. As a rule, a small cut should not be at the exact top or bottom of a page. There should be a few lines above or below it to preserve the form of the page. Pictures, charts, or other illustrative material should always be placed as close as possible to the point to be illustrated. For very young children, pictures above the text are usually more effective than pictures located below, because less likely to be covered by the child's hand. However, for interest and variety, not all pictures should be above the text, even in a primary book.



In preparing books for school children, the illustrations should be such as will appeal to pupils of the age for which the book is planned. A book, however attractive, is not well designed unless it is appropriate to the needs of those who are to use it.

In recent years numerous studies have been made of children's reactions to pictures. From a summary of these,<sup>1</sup> the following findings are cited:

Children in nursery school and in the first grade like factual pictures—pictures of familiar, everyday things.

Pictures of elves, fairies, and other fanciful creatures become popular in the second and third grades.

Children usually prefer the realistic type of illustration to the stylized or decorative type.

They like pictures in which there are a few large, easily distinguishable objects, with the important figures centered.

Pictures with some minor details are more popular than those showing practically nothing but the major figures.

Of black and white pictures, those with some shading are preferred to outline drawings.

Children like especially pictures that show action and suggest a story.

<sup>1</sup> "Children's Reactions to Illustrations," by Jean Ayer, in the *Newsletter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts*, June, 1938.

Pictures of animals are popular. Domestic animals are usually preferred by little children and wild animals by older children.

All children enjoy humorous pictures, but the child's idea of what is funny is often quite different from the adult's. Colored pictures are preferred to those without color.

Pictures with many colors are preferred to those with only two or three colors.

The youngest children show preference for definite outlines, clear, vivid color, and strong color contrasts. Children in grades above the primary show a developing fondness for tints and shades.

Children who have had special training in art do not present in their choice of pictures any marked variation from those without this training.

In connection with these statements, it should be borne in mind that there are exceptions to every rule. The findings are included here, not as hard and fast dicta, but with the thought that they may be suggestive to persons trying to select books that will appeal to many children—as every well-designed juvenile text should.

This article is, in itself, only a suggestion. If it influences even a few people to study further the fascinating subject of design in children's books and the influence of such design, it will have achieved its purpose.

# Children's Opinions of Newbery Prize Books

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**I**N THE OCTOBER, 1939, editorial concerning books receiving the Newbery Awards Mr. Certain says, "One wonders what the results would be if the committee on awards were representative of both teachers and librarians, and indeed, of other groups sympathetically interested in children's reading."

The writer is in agreement with this statement. Librarians who see only a selected group of children, the better readers, get a limited and biased view of what children in general like. In a recent study<sup>1</sup> of what bright sixth grade children are reading, not a single Newbery Prize book was on the list of the twenty-two books reported on most often by the children. Librarians may overstress the literary merit of a book instead of considering its appeal to child interest. As a rule, librarians are closer to books while teachers are closer to children. Teachers find that action, adventure, plot, are factors that appeal most to children.

What are the children's feelings about the Newbery Prize books? Two questions may be considered. First, how many children read those books; and second, what do they say about them?

## Number of Children Reading Newbery Books

At the beginning of the school year the writer gave her 150 sixth-grade children a suggested reading list which included the Newbery Awards. In March a survey was made of the number of children who had read the various books on the Newbery list. Table I shows that,

<sup>1</sup> Rose Zelig, "What Sixth Grade Children Are Reading," *The Elementary English Review*, Vol. XIV, pp. 257-262 (November 1937).

although a few have become popular, these books are not generally well liked. The best liked book is *The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle*, which was read by 48 children. *Smoky and Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze* were read by 16 children and *Caddie Woodlawn* was read by 14 children, most of whom were girls. Four of the books had not been read at all, while the others had been read by a few of the children. On the basis of what these children read, Newbery prize books would certainly not be best sellers.

## Children's Opinions of Newbery Books

What do the children say about these books?

*The Story of Mankind* by Van Loon is liked by the superior boy whose father is a history professor. The boy likes the story form, the humor, and the author's personal views. Other children who tried to read this book straight through gave up, but many of them use it for the reference book that it really is. One bright girl writes:

One night I asked my father a question about Greece, as I could not find the answer in my encyclopedia. He suggested that I read a chapter about Greece in *The Story of Mankind* by Van Loon to find the desired information. I did, and liked the style so much that I started from the beginning of the book and read a number of chapters. It starts with the creation of the world and tells the history of the early tribes and races. It continues down through all history to the present day. It is a fine reference book for quick information about all history. It is not easy to read straight through, but is good to pick up from time to time.

—Marilyn Weiland

TABLE I  
NUMBER OF SIXTH GRADE CHILDREN WHO HAD READ THE  
FOLLOWING NEWBERY PRIZE BOOKS

N 150

AUTHOR	TITLE	BOYS	GIrls	TOTAL
Van Loon	The Story of Mankind	2	1	3
Lofting	Voyages of Dr. Dolittle	27	21	48
Hawes	Dark Frigate	2	0	2
Finger	Tales from Silver Lands	0	0	0
Chrisman	Shen of the Sea	1	1	2
James	Smoky	11	5	16
Mukerji	Gay-neck	1	2	3
Kelley	Trumpeter of Krakow	2	0	2
Field	Hitty; Her First Hundred Years*	7	18	25
Coatsworth	The Cat Who Went to Heaven	0	0	0
Armer	Waterless Mountain	0	0	0
Lewis	Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze	8	8	16
Meigs	Invincible Louisa	1	4	5
Shannon	Dobry	0	1	1
Brink	Caddie Woodlawn	1	13	14
Sawyer	Roller Skates	1	4	5
Seredy	White Stag	3	1	4
Enright	Thimble Summer	0	0	0

\* The fifth grade teacher read this book to her class last year.

*The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle*, by Lofting, is the most popular Newbery Award book. What makes this book so popular with the children? They like it because it is about animals, shows imagination, is humorous, exciting, and holds the reader's interest.

*Dark Frigate*, by Hawes, did not make a very good impression on the two boys who read it. One very bright boy writes:

*Dark Frigate* was fairly entertaining but it lacked the quality which book readers love. When reading a good book I usually stick to it in all of my spare time, but *Dark Frigate* lacked this quality. In some parts it was decidedly boring and often I skipped half a page at a time. But then again some parts were exciting and amusing. Altogether this book was fairly good but I would not recommend it to choosy readers. It told mostly of a boy who traveled on a large frigate and from this the book got its title.

—Raymond Klein

None of the children read *Tales From Silver Lands*, by Finger, and only one child read *Shen of the Sea*, by Chrisman.

Though *Smoky*, by James, has greater appeal to boys, girls also like it. This life story of a horse, out west on the range, written by one who knows, holds

children's interest although they claim that the beginning is dry. A girl writes:

*Smoky* is a very unusual book. It is so true to life that you live the story while you read it.

A boy writes:

I enjoyed this book every minute although the beginning was a little dry. I think that in any other book it wouldn't be right to use slang like in *Smoky*. I also think that some of the things the cowboys did were practically impossible. They always had the luck of doing real hard things that probably the strongest athlete couldn't do. But, taking this book as a whole, it is very good.

—Alan Rosenberg

Mukerji who wrote *Gay-neck*, and who has written other stories about animal life, has a background of experience and information which makes his stories ring true. But the deep, mystical philosophy that permeates this book makes it somewhat difficult for the average child. Only three children read *Gay-neck*, the story of a pigeon in India who is trained and later used as a carrier pigeon during the World War. A few very superior children like it because it combines all kinds of information with adventure and animal life. The section dealing with

*Gay-neck's* adventures in the World War is most liked by the children. A child above the average in reading and intelligence complains that there are too many hard words in the book.

No written reports were handed in for *The Trumpeter of Karkow*, by Kelley, read by two children, and *Dobry*, by Shannon, read by one child. *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*, by Coatsworth, *Waterless Mountain*, by Armer, and *Thimble Summer*, by Enright, were not read by any of the writer's sixth grade pupils.

Last year the book, *Hitty: Her First Hundred Years*, by Field, was read to the class by the fifth grade teacher. By reading a book to a class a teacher is able to make it more meaningful and enjoyable, especially to the weak readers. *Hitty*, carved out of mountain ash wood by a peddler for a little girl in Maine, writes from an antique shop of the many adventures she had during the hundred years of her life.

Some of the children liked this book while others did not. One girl writes:

The book was exciting and held my interest. Most of all I liked *Hitty* because each experience was different. In places it was a little hard to understand. By that I mean the book would talk about someone or something and would not explain it until further on in the story.

—Sue Ellen Blake

A very superior girl writes:

*Hitty* was a disappointment to me but if you like fairy tales and stories that are impossible you would like *Hitty*. It is written in an old-fashioned way with old-fashioned words and you spend half your time looking them up. It is a very dull book because she gets into too many adventures that all come out right. I felt the characters were changed too often and I didn't know them.

—Sylvia Shapiro

*Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*, by Lewis was read by eight boys and eight

girls. About ten of the sixteen children said they liked this story dealing with the adventures of a poor Chinese lad.

Some teachers claim that biography is not popular with children. But the present trend shows that well-written biography is enjoyed. However, *Invincible Louisa*, by Cornelia Meigs, the biography of Louisa May Alcott, does not seem very interesting to sixth-grade children.

*Caddie Woodlawn*, by Brink, was read by fourteen children. Caddie is a pioneer girl living on a western farm. She likes to romp and play with her brothers and is not lady-like enough to suit her mother. The many exciting experiences of this family, including trouble with the Indians, make this book attractive to the children. Every child who read it liked it.

One girl writes:

I liked this book very much because it shows what a girl can do whether she has money or not, if her mother doesn't treat her like a baby.

Another girl writes:

The part I liked best was when Caddie put an egg down Cousin Annabella's back just when Annabella was going to turn a summer-salt in the barn, in the hayloft. Annabella started to cry because she did not like squashy things and of course a squashy egg is squashy. . . . I liked the part about the dog. I felt like crying myself when their uncle took the dog away, because it was so real.

—Esther R. Minor

This same point is brought out by another girl who writes:

I think *Caddie Woodlawn* is a very excellent book because it is exciting yet true to life. It does not always have Caddie or her family heroes and they do wrong sometimes, like ordinary people. I feel that I know the characters of this book, their sorrows and joys.

—Sylvia Shapiro

The five children who read *Roller Skates*, by Sawyer said they liked it but none of them showed unusual enthusiasm about it.

# The Elementary School Library as a Means of Individual Instruction

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**B**ELIEF IN the rights of the individual and the confident assertion that he should have the opportunity for independent growth and development have been proclaimed by great teachers for more than two thousand years. This principle, fought for on battlefields and contended for around peace-conference tables, has been realized through the centuries at great sacrifice of time, money, and men. The United States was the first nation to apply the ideal on a broad scale. The early founders of our country held strictly to the notion that opportunity for growth and development of the individual is the inherent privilege of every one; at all times they spoke and wrote with this in mind.

The school systems of America sometimes have surged ahead in their contention for this ideal; at other times, in organizing and administering the schools, it appears that educators have trailed the

concept rather than taking the lead in providing such opportunity for the children of the nation.

In planning and developing school libraries, the schools have been particularly remiss in offering possibilities for individual growth. This unit, so rich in its opportunities for developing individual

tastes, individual standards, and individual power of thinking, generally has been neglected, or disdainfully overlooked. The oversight has been evident in the selection of books, in the slight provision for the use of the books, and in the meager help given the

children who enter the precincts of the library, a room too often unattractive and uninteresting.

In the three years of developing the Wentworth School library, certain of the shortcomings referred to were weighed carefully and so far as possible were avoided. The following functions were



Recreational reading is provided by permitting each room one period a week in the library.

early established as requisite for this library and have served to maintain standards through its growth:

1. To instruct the child in such a way as to make him familiar with regular library procedure.
2. To assist the child with the problems which originate with him at home and at school.
3. To provide help for teacher-projected problems.
4. To provide a clearing house for pictures, slides, victrola records, and clippings for assistance in the classroom as required by the needs of the pupils.
5. To make provisions for exhibits of materials in the classroom and in the library appropriate for special days and occasions.
6. To make provision for exhibits of materials designed for such special instruction as safety and health.
7. To provide space for exhibition of art and classroom projects that have been developed in the classrooms in the school.
8. To provide circulation of books selected by the children themselves overnight and over week-ends.
9. To make provision for pupil conferences and committee meetings with books of reference at hand for study

and research where greater freedom may be permitted than is sometimes found in the regular classroom.

10. To make provision for a cheerful, happy place in which the pupil may read or study, with a degree of freedom, the books and magazines which he desires to read without too much restraining influence of the supervisor.

The functions outlined are designed to correlate, fuse, and even to integrate to a considerable degree the subject matter of the curriculum. The library is designed as the great central dynamo to give power to the entire school. It is intended that this force or energy shall enrich the experiences of every individual in the school, that the accelerated pupil shall be

privileged to work to his fullest capacity, that the so-called "average" pupil may be stimulated to work with greater interest and effectiveness, and that the weaker and more poorly prepared pupil may be aroused to greater enjoyment in his work, to the realization of

more effective achievement in his studies, that each and all may achieve more fully the goal of true education, the better adaptation to environment.

The Wentworth School has an enrollment of more than thirteen hundred pupils, embraces kindergarten through eighth grade, with grades six to eight de-



Books may be withdrawn for overnight or week-end use by grades five to eight. One of the "King Arthur Murals" is in the background.

partmentalized. In the departmental work the teacher meets four or five groups of pupils a day; teachers of music, art, and science meet as many as nine different groups a week. The remainder of the organization of the school is regular except one "ungraded room" composed of retarded or low ability children.

The purpose of this article is to consider the effectiveness of the library for individual instruction in such a school as here described, and to suggest techniques that will be efficient for this individual instruction.

Since there is much that is new to be worked out and there is a meager amount of literature on effective school library procedure, the staff of such a library is of paramount importance. The librarian of the school is an experienced teacher, a graduate of the Chicago Teachers College, has a university degree with a major in English, has taken professional courses in library training, and has had actual experience in the public library of the city. In classifying, cataloging, marking, shelving and handling of books a W. P. A. librarian is of great assistance. On occasions when there is special need, two or three extra helpers are available from the Federal Library Project. The third source of help is the group of pupil-library-workers; these helpers are on hand before and after school and on many other occasions to assist, and often to take the lead in handling books, to suggest interesting books to inquiring students, and to serve on such committees as "bulletin board," "picture mounting," and "magazine custodian." The appointment as library helper is highly prized among the pupils. The experiences on the job have been valuable for the accelerated pupil able to give time to this form of school service. Some of the outcomes of the work of

this student group will be noted from time to time through this study.

An important principle is that the librarian should have the view-point of both the teacher and the librarian, and that she should be greatly interested in books and in children. There must be provision to help relieve the teacher-librarian from certain routine duties, many of which offer good training for pupils and are effectively carried out by them.

Choosing between a small room into which could be crowded the members of one class and a very spacious room, formerly serving as both gymnasium and assembly hall, selection promptly fell on the latter. This room, the only one on the fourth floor of the building, is architecturally almost perfect for housing a school library. The high ceilings, the wide arched windows on the east, and the cozy stage on the west serve to give an atmosphere of quiet repose and at the same time to suggest utilitarian appointments that are most gratifying. Bookshelves of convenient height and easy accessibility line three sides of the room. To the right and left of the stage are murals depicting scenes from the legends of King Arthur; done in conventional style of the first decade of this century, the murals, recently cleaned and retouched by W. P. A. artists, form colorful and attractive settings for a library. On the north and south walls of the library and on the wall forming the rear of the stage are other murals done in the modern style in green and blue tones, depicting scenes from Little Women, Tom Sawyer, Life on the Mississippi, and imaginary concepts of modern youth. Excellent lighting is assured for dark days by lights dropped over each table.

Movable library tables and bentwood

chairs placed on a composition floor have proved most successful; the seating capacity of the room is very comfortable for sixty and could be increased to eighty without serious inconvenience. In an extreme end of the room is a reference table capable of accommodating as many as twelve pupils at a time; found here are earnest young students eagerly studying encyclopedias and special reference books secured *ad libitum* from nearby reference shelves. Often these groups resolve themselves into committees for working out certain problems of their own or problems assigned them by the teachers, for the solution of which they may be excused from the usual classroom period. A large globe and unabridged dictionary are important tools found on this reference table.

To defeat any feeling of formality which might be induced by so large a room, numerous travel pictures, colorful book jackets, and bulletins are distributed attractively and appropriately about the room. One bulletin board across the front of the stage shows results of book contests, features books known as the "Book of the Week," gives current news of the school, and other valuable data which arise from time to time. Through the bulletin board committee an attempt is made each week to appeal to as many individual tastes as possible. The success of the bulletin board is attested by the eager interest which it evokes when a group enters the library.

Near the reference table is the magazine rack with its fascinating new numbers on the top shelf and the numbers of the past year filed just beneath; some children who can find little of interest in any book pore over the pages of magazines, reading about new inventions, new types of airplanes, and the latest in radios and automobiles. Sometimes the popu-

larity of the magazines makes it necessary to reserve them as special rewards for completing other readings. It is generally found better, though, not to interfere with the tastes of a child in this manner. The card catalog on a wide desk is easy to use; a modern steel cabinet has a choice filing of pictures and pamphlets neatly arranged for immediate location and use.

In addition to the reference table two smaller rooms with tables and chairs are situated off the stage providing further opportunity for research and for committee work unhampered by the activities in the large room. Here, for instance, officials of the student council worked out a form of oath to be administered to the new Mayor of Wentworth modeled after the one taken by the President of the United States.

Because of the makeup, equipment, careful selection of books, and general atmosphere of the library much of the restraint of the classroom is broken down and a very happy setting for reading and study is maintained. Particularly it is planned to have the child feel that his individuality is respected and preserved; in this library he is given such happy and joyful experiences that he will associate the time spent here with his most pleasant memories. To it he will turn for individual help and direction at all times.

Since the school library must have a carry-over to the public library, the organization is planned on the Dewey Decimal System used there. A simplified chart of this system is prominently posted; practice in locating books by means of this chart is one of the important lessons given the children. The accelerated child often evinces great interest in this system and progresses in the mastery of it.

Pride is taken in the fact that the

shelves of the library have few books that may be classed as mere text books; with the exception of encyclopedias there are no sets of books. Seldom is there more than one, or at most two copies, of any book except in rare cases such as *Pinocchio* or *Dr. Dolittle* where the demand continually exceeds the supply. The books have been accumulated in the three years from three specific sources: the regular library purchases through the Board of Education; special gifts, such as the purchase of all the Newbery Prize winners by a recent graduating class; and the unit group of 700 volumes furnished as a semi-permanent loan by the Chicago Public Library, composed of very carefully chosen titles. With individual needs in mind, and with consideration of an integrated curriculum, the Chicago Public Library made this very fine collection. The 2300 volumes now in the library may be grouped as follows:

Fiction—780

Easy books—292 (separately shelved for kindergarten through third grade)

Non-fiction—1053

Reference books—102 (By volume rather than by sets)

Professional books—80

Magazines—13 subscriptions

Besides adding to the child's interest in gathering materials for reports, the picture collection referred to above is a means by which the indifferent or non-reading child has been won to a love of the library. In requesting help on individual needs in history, geography, or art, a frequent question has become, "Have you any pictures about . . . . .?" A child who returns to the classroom with pictures to illustrate his findings, leaves the library with the air of the professional student and a confident assurance that cannot be gainsaid.

Early in the organization of the library it was apparent that, if it was to serve the needs of the individual efficiently and understandingly, the rules must be few in number and those few extremely elastic in interpretation. With the number of books fewer than two for each child registered in the school, circulation is still confined to over-night and week ends. If, however, the book is needed for classroom work for a longer period of time, exception is made. The library is open before and after school as well as throughout the day; besides the regular scheduled classes which bring each individual to the library at least once a week, small groups constantly are using the library for committee work and for individual reference work.

The individual has complete freedom in choosing his books. At the beginning of the semester the teacher-librarian selects and puts on the table some forty or fifty books for the members of a class as they enter. About half the first period is devoted to introducing the children to as many types of books as time permits. This is done by one sentence descriptions, by reading short excerpts, or by giving other children's opinions. Each child is then permitted to choose from this collection or to browse among the books on the shelves as he pleases. There is never any compulsion to finish a book once started; if the child selects a book which is too easy or too hard, he may discard it when he discovers his mistake, and thus rectify his error of his own accord. If a child browses apparently too long, opening this volume or examining pictures in that one, he is most likely growing more than if he were reading a book under coercion.

For the convenience of the child, reading cards are kept for recording his place in the book from time to time. From fourth grade up, the pupil records on his

card the author, title, and number of his book, the number of the page on which he was reading at the end of the period, and also indicates the books which he has finished. At the end of the semester the child copies the names of books read onto a cumulative record; this record goes along with the individual through the school. It is with a feeling of satisfaction and growth that each reader surveys his record and judges his own advancement. In order that the teacher-librarian may assist the pupil more intelligently, the classroom teacher enters the reading-grade level of each child on his reading card. Library rules for the most part are based on The Golden Rule; and, although "pin-drop silence" does not pervade the room, there is much evidence of constructive activity, good hard work, and relaxed enjoyment constantly taking place in the same room. The library boasts an atmosphere approaching complete democratic freedom rather than one of austere regimented silence.

From the standpoint of the individual child, whether accelerated or slow, the help, understanding, and technical knowledge given by a trained personnel staff can be judged to a great extent by recounting a normal day's activities.

It is a Monday morning in the middle of the semester; the bell for the entrance of pupils has just rung. Almost immediately the influx to the library begins with the return of books borrowed over the week-end. A glance at the circulation chart shows that nearly four hundred books have been taken out by the approximate six hundred children in grades five to eight privileged to have books over the week-end. The student-librarians and the clerk work fast, stacking and sorting the books as the deluge increases. During the ten minutes allowed the pupils to return books and get back to the

classroom the teacher-librarian stands by to prevent loitering and to see that the room is promptly cleared for the arrival of the first class. As the pupils come in one door and out the other, she grants requests for keeping books longer, and listens to such greetings as, "Will you save this book for me for tomorrow?" or "These are great airplane plans."

At nine, a few stragglers dash in for the last minute delivery and every one stands at attention as the strains of "The Star Spangled Banner" and the "Pledge to the Flag" float up through the ventilator. All hands work furiously now, slipping the book-cards into the correct pockets of the four hundred books and seeing them promptly shelved within the limit of the next thirty minutes. The teacher-librarian starts to assist with this routine but—the first class is at the door.

This is a seventh grade class and its members manage to file past the bulletin board and look around for any new book displays; a few make a dash for the magazine rack. About ten minutes are allowed out of each class for library instruction. Any written exercises following the lesson on the card catalog, for instance, or other phases of library work are entirely voluntary and no marks are given. Almost all the children complete the library exercises before the semester ends. This method is practical as well as enjoyable, because library materials are such that the whole class cannot use them at the same time. Individual instruction and repetition are necessary because of the time lapse between the teaching of the lesson and the actual practical application.

This seventh grade class is familiar with the Dewey Decimal System, and employs this knowledge in an inter-table contest to see who can find non-fiction books in the shortest time. Each pupil is

assigned a title to locate; for example, Jane is to find a cook-book, Harry is to find a book on airplanes, and so on around the class. If necessary, the Dewey Decimal chart is consulted and the children from two competing tables start simultaneously for the shelves; the race goes on; the finals will be run off the following library lesson to determine the "speediest library-book-finders."

In the meantime the student-librarians have been shelving the books. The class no longer is held as a unit and individual activity begins. The reading cards are passed and from then on each child is on his own. The teacher-librarian's job has just begun. She helps locate books when the author's name is forgotten or when it is illegible on the reading card. Sometimes she has such slim clues as "a big blue book my brother brought home last week and it's about knights" to help her in locating books. In due time most of the children are settled—some with reference books—some with magazines.

At this point the student-librarians are sent out to various rooms for overdue books. They distribute professional magazines and teachers' books for the week and then their work is finished until recess when they come back to shelve books used during the morning.

In the meantime requests from teachers in the form of notes have accumulated on the librarian's desk: "Send twenty books about third grade level for one week"; "Have you a story about early Chicago?"; "Please send some slides on the National Parks." These requests are answered in spare moments during the day.

Just then the door opens and ten children sent by the social studies teacher to work as committees walk back to the reference table. There are two commit-

tees and the chairman of each announces that his committee is finding material on the English and Spanish explorers respectively. The chairman quietly assigns the explorer on which each member of the committee is to report and when all are agreed the children work by themselves, moving back and forth between the history and reference shelves. They occasionally confer with the chairman, or exchange materials with one another. The committees will work for short periods during the week and then will use the small rooms off the stage to practice their oral reports.

With the coming of the fifth grade class, ten minutes is given to the study of the parts of the book; afterwards those who wish to learn more about illustrations, copyrights, indexes, etc. are given work-sheets for the purpose. While these activities progress, a committee from a science class works on the identification of birds. Pictures, magazine articles, books, reference material on birds, rapidly accumulate on their reference table. At this point the Mayor of Wentworth rushes into the room looking for a volume, "How to Conduct a Meeting." Properly armed for his political career he rushes back to the social science teacher, the advisor of the student council. An ardent stamp collector claims the attention of the librarian with request for help in interpreting the stamp catalog. A bored, disinterested boy, who "hates reading" receives a challenge when the librarian produces a book with sailors' knots and a volume entitled *Ship Ahoy*, for this boy is a Sea Scout. A casual stroll toward two girls reveals that they are giggling uncontrollably over *Mary Poppins*; a conversation with them ensues as to which is the funniest part of the book.

As the day proceeds almost every book on hobbies is called for; the children have

learned that the library has books which give pleasure and joy to the readers and that these books may be had for the asking. Book talks by the children sometimes fill in a few waiting moments, and because they are voluntary, they are popular and interesting.

The kindergarten class comes to the library, looks at beautifully illustrated books, and is entertained by a story. After the second grade class returns to its room, a greatly accelerated member of the group is found sitting on the floor poring over Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare*. With the ringing of the bell at three o'clock, the fifth grade children come for their overnight books. Except for Friday night, only one grade each night may take books home; here again the rules may be suspended when there is a special request for a book.

For development of initiative and individuality school clubs offer unusual opportunity; a very popular club of the school is the library club, membership of which is more than fifty. This membership is drawn from the seventh grade; interestingly enough the ones who choose the library club are not always the best readers, but often are the slow readers who are a bit vague as to why they wish to join this club, except that they "like to come to the library."

The organization includes officers, committees, and dues. Each fall the club presents the Book Week play for the upper grades and at times for the Parent-Teacher Association. The small stage in the library offers excellent opportunity for rehearsals and try-outs. During the year several meetings are turned over to presentation of group dramatizations, pantomimes, and tableaux of book titles which resolve themselves into guessing games; the members not in the cast guess at the name of the book.

The social aspect of the club plays no small part in its make-up; the end-of-the-semester party is a gala affair of which the treasure hunt is the big event. For this the committee divides the club into teams of four, laboriously writes out clues on small pieces of paper, and painstakingly hides clues and treasure. Small candy suckers for the finders constitute the "treasure," but these trifles are very valuable measured in terms of hilarity and fun which they produce during the hunt.

Among the various excursions taken by the club during the year, the ones to visit authors have been especially popular. The latest prize from such a trip was the signature of Admiral Richard E. Byrd secured when the polar explorer was lecturing in a Loop bookstore. Visits to the branch libraries and to the central library have likewise been well attended by the members of the club.

After the transaction of the regular business, meetings are very informal, and members are permitted to read or do very much what they choose. This spring the individuals had great fun making book puzzles in the form of rebuses, as well as "book scrambles," that is, scrambled titles. These were posted on the bulletin board with the name of the maker and everyone was invited to guess. A regular delivery system finally had to be installed to take care of the communications between the maker and the guesser of the puzzle. The last act of the club in June was to vote its money remaining in the treasury for the purchase of the Newbery Prize Book when it should be announced for the current year. From the activities of the club it can clearly be seen that out of the freedom and variety of the organization, individuality can never be smothered.

Individual preferences in reading can very easily be followed with library club

members, since they are allowed to withdraw books every night and are better known to the librarian. Very often, either with or without teacher stimulation, a child starts reading one type of story and keeps this up until he reads every available book in that particular field. Stories about horses or dogs, for instance, follow one after another until one wonders at the reader's singleness of taste. After exhausting the field, he will just as readily become absorbed in another interest and pursue that as fully as he did the former.

Certain children become greatly interested in the lives and comments of authors, particularly of contemporaries. Intimate acquaintance with a child will often disclose related interests which he possesses; the child interested in music, for example, reads the new biographies of musicians. Recently a girl was found giving all her spare time to reading about aviation, with the serious determination in mind that she will become an aviatrix.

#### *Conclusions*

1. Experiences with the elementary school library show that with an appropriate library setting, a well-chosen collection of books, a carefully trained library personnel, there are great possibilities for the care of individual differences, for the help of all persons whether retarded, accelerated, or of average ability.
2. Many interests, hobbies, and vocational aptitudes may be disclosed and encouraged most effectively through the school library.

3. The work of the regular classroom receives new emphasis and enrichment through the assistance of the school library.

4. The individual child receives much enthusiasm for proper leisure-time activity, and direction for the use of other libraries during his school life and for future library work.

5. The library is very favorable for developing individual power and strength through the stimulating effect of pictures, slides, exhibits, magazines, and collection of pamphlet materials.

6. Provision for committees and for small group assignments is especially helpful in providing leadership and growth for the accelerated and more stable child.

7. Many skills, appreciations, attitudes, often not of the nature to be measured objectively, follow the training and experience of the school library.

8. The great variety and the wide range of difficulty of materials assembled in the school library make for an appeal to the tastes of all the pupils of a school and provide guidance along the lines of individual techniques so highly desired.

9. The library club is extremely effective as a means of individual training.

10. From the independent planning and the placing of responsibility on the individual it is maintained that self-reliance, training in character values, and development of good citizenship traits accrue from the sort of library organization outlined.

# Latin American Countries In Children's Literature

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This bibliography was first printed in the fall of 1938. *Review* readers found it useful and have continued to refer to the issues (October and November) in which it appeared. These two issues have now become scarce, however. This, and the fact that Latin America is of increasing interest to us, prompted the editor to reprint the list. Miss Hogan and Miss Yeschko have revised and enlarged the bibliography.

## FICTION

### *For the Young Child*

Bannon, Laura. *Manuela's Birthday in Old Mexico*. Illus. by the author. Whitman, 1939. Grades 3-4.

A delightful story about a little girl's birthday celebration in Taxco, Mexico. Colorful illustrations add to the charm of the story.

Beim, Lorraine and Jerrold. *The Burro That Had a Name*. Pictures by Howard Simon. Harcourt, 1939. Grades 2-4.

Chucho, a little Mexican boy, finds that it is wise to have a burro with a name. Both the story and illustrations will please the young reader.

Bemelmans, Ludwig. *Quito Express*. Illus. by the author. Viking, 1938. Grades 1-3.

An amusing story about Pedro's trip from Otovalo to Guayaquil and his efforts to keep the two chickens from eating the corn.

Bontemps, Arna, and Hughes, Langston. *Popo and Fifina*. Illus. by E. Simms Campbell. Macmillan, 1932. Grades 3-4.

An interesting story of a boy and girl of Haiti. "One of the first distinguished child stories about the black race."

Brandeis, Madeline. *The Little Mexican Donkey Boy*. Grosset, Dunlap. Grades 3-4.

Informational material under a slight story disguise.

Church, Peggy Pond. *The Burro of Angelitos*. Illus. by Gigi Shaule Johnson. London, Suttonhouse Ltd., 1932. Grades 3-4.

An amusing animal story which is well illustrated with colorful Mexican pictures and designs. An unhappy coincidence brings together Tomasito, the singing burro, and Tranquilidad, the laziest man in the village.

Credle, Ellis. *Pepe and the Parrot*. Illus. by the author. Nelson, 1937. Grades 3-5.

Pepe, the little Mexican dog, is driven out of his comfortable home by the taunts of the parrot. Weary, but rich in wisdom, he returns home to become the master of his domain. An animal story in a Mexican setting.

Edwards, Florence Dunn. *Menino*. Illus. by Mary Hellmuth. Grosset, 1940. Grades 2-4.

The story of a little Brazilian boy who earned the money for a carnival suit in an unexpected way. This is a nice story about a small boy's generosity.

Eliot, Frances. *Pablo's Pipe*. Illus. by the author. E. P. Dutton, 1936. Grades 3-5.

A charming tale of Pablo's musical ability which made him the family wage earner upon one disastrous occasion. The illustrations are typical of Mexico—colorful and intricate in design.

Flack, Marjorie, and Larsson, Karl. *Pedro*. Illus. by Karl Larsson. Macmillan, 1940. Grades 3-5.

Pedro's visit to the market place on a gay fiesta day changed the course of his life, for it was there that he met a family of Americans. His work as house boy for the American family led to many exciting adventures for Pedro. This is a richly-illustrated story of present-day Mexico.

**Gay, Zhenya, and Gay, Jan. *Pancho and His Burro*.** Morrow, 1930. Grades 1-3.

Mexican peasant children, Pancho and Lola, with their donkey, Burrito, spend a successful day at the market. The unusual illustrations by the authors add much local color to the book.

**Gill, Richard C. *Kulu, the Llama*.** Illus. by Nils Hogner. Henry Holt, 1939. Grades 2-4.

A humorous story of a llama who wanted to be a horse. The consequences of this ambition almost proved disastrous for Kulu until he proved that he was a true llama. The accompanying illustrations are both gay and descriptive.

**Hader, Berta and Elmer. *Jamaica Johnny*.** Macmillan, 1935. Grades 3-5.

The author-artists have presented a beautiful story woven around the life of a little native of Jamaica. Johnny's industry and toil are rewarded in an unusual manner on Christmas Day.

**Hogner, Dorothy Childs. *The Education of a Burro*.** Pictures by Nils Hogner. Nelson, 1936. Grades 3-5.

Another Mexican animal story in which Carlos, the burro, is the subject of an educational experiment.

**Jackson, Charlotte. *Tito, the Pig of Guatemala*.** Illus. by Kurt Wiese. Dodd, Mead, 1940. Grades 1-3.

Tito, the "pig with a personality," involves the entire family of Diego in a series of adventures until they decide to sell him at the fiesta. Tito then takes matters into his own hands.

**Keto, E. *Tonto and Pronto*.** Grosset, 1938. Grades 1-3.

Pronto's exasperating fondness for food causes many mishaps on fiesta day in Mexico. His insatiable appetite almost proves his undoing, but there is a surprise ending that makes Pronto a hero.

**Kuh, Charlotte. *A Train, a Boat, and an Island*.** Illus. by Frank Dobias. Macmillan, 1933. Grades 2-3.

A story-book account of the travels of the Perkins' family from Chicago to Bermuda.

**Lee, Melicent H. *Pablo and Petra*.** Illus. by Leslie W. Lee. Crowell, 1934. Grades 3-5.

A charming story of two children who sold their mother's pottery on market day in town.

**Morrow, Elizabeth. *The Painted Pig*.** Illus. by Rene d'Harnoncourt. Knopf, 1930. Grades 2-3.

A Mexican picture book. The illustrations comprise more than half of the book, and the accompanying text affords the primary pupil an insight into Mexican life.

**Politi, Leo. *Little Pancho*.** Illus. by the author. Viking, 1938. Grades 1-3.

The story of a small Mexican boy and his dog. An excellent book for primary-grade children.

**Thomas, Margaret L. *The Burro's Moneybag*.** Abingdon Press, 1931. Grades 3-4.

A little boy's desire for a burro of his own is charmingly set forth. Accompanying illustrations indicate the progress of his ambition.

**Whitlock, Virginia B. *Maria Mello and Chiquito*.** Illus. by Robt. W. Frome. Grosset and Dunlap, 1935. Grades 1-2.

Maria, who lived in the jungles of Brazil along the Amazon River, and Chiquito, the monkey, were good friends. When Maria's family went into the jungle to gather rubber juice, they found their lost pet.

#### *For the Intermediate-Grade Child*

**Armer, Laura Adams. *The Forest Pool*.** Illus. by the author. Longmans, 1938. Grades 4-6.

Unusual illustrations add to the charm of this tale of two Mexican children and their search for the wisdom of the iguana.

Baker, Nina Brown. *Inca Gold*. Wilde, 1938. Grades 4-6.

A romantic tale of the adventures of Felice and Carol Markham in a section of Peru that remains an unexplored region. The expedition to find the lost ransom of Atahualpa forms the background for the exciting adventures of these children.

Barris, Anna Andrews. *Red Tassels for Huki in Peru*. Illus. by Iris Beatty Johnson. Whitman, 1939. Grades 4-6.

The story of the adventures of a llama that did not want to grow up. Huki runs away from the herd only to find himself in the midst of a terrifying fight with a lion. He returns to the fold a wiser and older llama.

Baylor, Frances Courtenay (Barnum). *Juan and Juanita*. Illus. by Gustaf Tenggren. Houghton Mifflin, 1926 (Rev. Ed.). Grades 4-6.

Two Mexican children taken captive by the Indians find their way home again across the desert. Many perilous adventures and exciting episodes constitute a major part of their journey.

Benjamin, Nora. *Fathom Five: A Story of Bermuda*. Illus. by the author. Random House, 1939. Grades 4-6.

A tale of piracy, buried treasure, and blockade-running during the Civil War. Traces the story of the Carroll family from the first Christopher Carroll, a survivor of the *Sea Venture*, to the present-day representative of the family.

Benjamin, Nora. *Roving All the Day*. Illus. by the author. Random House, 1937. Grades 5-7.

How Tony, an American girl, spent a delightful Christmas holiday in Nassau and Harbor Island.

Blake, Gladys. *Sally Goes to Court*. Illus. by Harve Stein. Appleton-Century, 1937. Grades 5-7.

The adventures of Sally Burton at the court of Emperor Maximilian of Mexico. Her imprisonment in an Aztec ruin forms the climax to this unusual story of nineteenth century intrigue in Mexico.

Coatsworth, Elizabeth. *The Boy with the Parrot*. Pictures by Wilfrid S. Bronson. Macmillan, 1930. Grades 4-6.

The exciting adventures encountered by a boy vendor on the roads of Guatemala.

Desmond, Alice Curtis. *The Lucky Llama*. Illus. by Wilfrid Bronson. Macmillan, 1939. Grades 4-6.

An animal story about a llama of Peru and a small boy's devotion to his pet. Cachi's honesty in returning the white llama, symbol of good luck, brings him both excitement and recompense.

Durfee, Burr, and McMorris, Helen and John. *Mateo and Lolita*. Houghton Mifflin, 1939. Grades 4-6.

This book is commendable for the abundance of full-page photographs depicting Mexican life and scenery. It is a true story of two Mexican children who climax a series of adventures with a visit to Xochimilco.

Gaines, Ruth. *Lucita*. A Child's Story of Old Mexico. Rand McNally, 1913. Grades 4-6.

Eight-year-old Lucita, the playmate of an Austrian prince, sees her wish come true on Christmas Day. Historical legends amid a background of contemporary customs.

Harris, Lina Small and Harris, Valeria. *Tony and Toinette in the Tropics*. Illus. by Margarete O. Dornbusch. Whitman, 1939. Grades 4-6.

Tony and Toinette are introduced to local customs in thirteen islands of the West Indies. Emphasis is on the informational aspects.

Hutchinson, Ruth H. *The Blue Butterfly Goes to South America*. Pictured by Kurt Wiese. Whitman, 1940. Grades 3-6.

A picture-story of the adventures of two children in South America.

James, Winifred. *The Adventures of Luisa in Mexico*. Illus. by Oliver Herford. E. P. Dutton. Grades 4-6.

Mexico is again the setting for the story.

Lee, Melicent H. *At the Jungle's Edge: A Boy and Girl of Costa Rica*. Illus. by Leslie W. Lee. Crowell, 1938.

How a boy and girl prepare cocoa beans for market. Interesting facts about the jungle are revealed in the story.

Lee, Melicent H. *Children of Banana Land*. Illus. by Leslie W. Lee. Crowell, 1936. Grades 4-6.

Benito and Lola, two children of Honduras, witness the activities of a banana plantation.

Lee, Melicent H. *Marcos: A Mountain Boy of Mexico*. Pictures by Berta and Elmer Hader. Albert Whitman, 1937. Grades 4-6.

Beautiful illustrations, typical of the charm of Mexican peasant life, add local color to this realistic tale of a little mountain boy who journeys to the city to find work as a weaver. Many village occupations are introduced into this story.

Lee, Melicent H. *Volcanoes in the Sun: A Boy and Girl of Guatemala*. Illus. by Leslie W. Lee. Crowell, 1937. Grades 4-6.

Rosa and Ciro are adopted by a coffee planter. Their daily-life activities are portrayed against the interesting background of coffee-growing in the ancient town of Antigua. Good information about coffee growing.

Malkus, Alida Sims. *The Silver Llama*. Pictures by the author. Winston, 1939. Grades 4-6.

Fine illustrations combine with a good story to make *The Silver Llama* a worthwhile international book. Cusi's experiences as a herder in the Andes are full of interest and suspense.

Moon, Grace P. *Nadita*. Illus. by Carl Moon. Doubleday, Page and Co., 1927. Grades 4-6.

This story will appeal to all little girls who like the conventional Cinderella-type story. Mexican setting.

Moon, Grace. *Solita*. Illus. by Carl Moon. Doubleday, 1938. Grades 4-6.

Strange and exciting experiences begin for Solita, a little Mexican waif, the day her aunt and uncle take her away from the Hacienda of the Little Trees, where she had been living under the protection of the Senora. The capture of Solita and her relatives by bandits had an unexpected finale, for the little girl was able to play an important role in the restoration of the Hacienda of the Little Trees to the Senora.

Moon, Grace P. *Tita of Mexico*. Illus. by Carl Moon. Stokes, 1934. Grades 5-7.

A mystery concerning Tita's family forms the basis for the plot. Some worthwhile information about village life and the customs of the people.

Perkins, Lucy Fitch. *The Mexican Twins*. Illus. by the author. Houghton Mifflin, 1915. Grades 4-5.

The daily activities of Tonio and Tita, who live with their parents in an adobe hut on the great hacienda of Senor Fernandez.

Purnell, Idella. *Pedro the Potter*. Illus. by Nils Hogner. Nelson, 1935. Grades 5-6.

How Pedro, an Indian boy, became a great painter in Mexico City. This is a story of Indian village life in Mexico among the pottery-makers.

Putnam, David B. *David Goes Voyaging*. Illus. by Isabel Cooper, et al. Putnam, 1925. Grades 4-6.

Eleven-year-old David Putman relates his adventures as a member of the *Arcturus* expedition. In the company of his famous uncle, William Beebe, he spends three months in Pacific waters studying sea life and visiting desert islands.

Simon, Charlie May. *Popo's Miracle*. Illustrations by Howard Simon. Dutton, 1938. Grades 4-6.

A fine book which portrays life among Mexican children. Boys and girls who like to paint or read about artists will enjoy this story. It was Popo, the donkey, who was the cause of Raphael's exciting adventure.

Smith, Nora A. *Under the Cactus Flag*. Houghton Mifflin, 1899. Grades 4-5.

This is a story of Mexico in the late nineteenth century.

Steen, Elizabeth K. *Red Jungle Boy*. Illus. by the author. Harcourt Brace, 1937. Grades 5-6.

Authentic informational account of a Caraja Indian boy's life in the wilderness of Brazil. Interesting facts about the Indians, the jungles, animals, etc. An exceptionally fine book which will appeal to all children.

St. John, Chas. W. *Porto Rican Neighbors*. Illus. by Ruth King. Friendship Press, 1930. Grades 4-6.

A series of adventures of two American children and their Porto Rican neighbors, climaxing in a hurricane.

Stoker, Catherine B. *Little Daughter of Mexico*. Dallas, Dealey-Lowe, 1937. Grades 5-7.

Realistic story of Mexican rural and city life. It tells how Amalia grew to be an opera singer.

Thomas, Margaret Loring. *Carlos, Our Mexican Neighbor*. Drawings by Willis R. Lohse. Bobbs-Merrill, 1938. Grades 4-6.

Under the guise of an absorbing narrative, the author shows a conflict between the new and the old order in Mexico. Carlos, a little Mexican boy, delights in helping to build a real adobe schoolhouse and in participating in the Christmas festival.

Thomas, Margaret L. *Carmelita Sings: A Bolivian Story*. Abingdon Press, 1935. Grades 5-6.

The story of Carmelita's and Juan's adventures in the South American republic.

Thomas, Margaret L. *The Pack Train Steamboat*. Bobbs-Merrill, 1932. Grades 5-6.

Extremely interesting material about nineteenth century Indian muleteers and South American transportation. Capac, a native Peruvian Indian boy, found excitement and fame the reward of his interest in the building of the *Yavari*, a steamboat.

Tschiffely, A. F. *The Tale of Two Horses*. Illus. by Kurt Wiese. Simon and Schuster, 1935. Grades 5-6.

Two Patagonian horses, Mancha and Gato, have an exciting journey from Argentine to Washington, D. C. In their journey through South and Central America, many interesting and valuable facts are recorded by these amusing reporters.

Von Hagen, Victor Wolfgang, and Hawkins, Quail. *Quetzal Quest: The Story of the Capture of the Quetzal, the Sacred Bird of the Aztecs and the Mayas*. Illus. by Antonio Sotomayor. Harcourt, 1939. Grades 4-6.

A splendid story that makes the search for the quetzals a fascinating adventure for the reader. Fidelio, a little Indian boy of Honduras, renders valuable aid to the American scientist through his patient devotion and careful tending of the birds. Interesting scientific and legendary material is woven into this account of the dangers and hardships involved in capturing the quetzals and bringing them to America.

Waldeck, JoBesse M. *Little Jungle Village*. Illus. by Katharina Von Dombrowski. Viking, 1940. Grades 4-6.

Peh-weh and his sister, Man-o, establish their own village in the South American jungle. The author actually met these children in British Guiana and from them learned of the customs and mythology of the jungle.

Weil, Ann. *The Silver Fawn*. Illus. by E. Leon. Bobbs-Merrill, 1939. Grades 5-7.

Chico's meeting with Senor Bill opens the path to many adventures and much happiness

# Easy Books For The Intermediate Grades

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ONE PROBLEM of the upper elementary school is to provide reading material interesting to children whose reading ability is below the level of their general maturity. The bibliography presented here represents an attempt to discover books which would help to meet this need. The books listed have been selected upon the following bases:

1. They embody to a high degree the elements of children's interests in literature as these have been discovered by research.
2. Vocabulary and style of writing are relatively simple but not too childish.
3. Many of the books are included in primary grade lists compiled by authorities in the education of young children.
4. The books have been tried out over varying periods of time and have been found useful in developing better attitudes and abilities in reading.

The variety of material may appear somewhat narrow, due largely to the application of the fourth criterion. Books of simple social and scientific content were more consistently popular in the two schools where the materials were tried out. This may have resulted from the influence of the general school pro-

grams which consciously utilized the immediate environment as a source of interest and a means of developing social habits and understandings.

The nature of the content and the difficulty of the material are indicated by the short paragraph from each book. Grateful acknowledgment is made to the publishers for permission to quote these paragraphs.

*Ab, The Cave Man.* W. L. Nida. Flanagan, 1911.

About three o'clock one afternoon Ab, who was in the pit, heard a yell from the treetop.

He knew what it meant, and he leaped toward the tree just as Oak came tumbling down.

"Run!" Oak said, and they dashed across the open toward the forest.

Up the first big tree they clambered.

Oak shouted as he gasped for breath, "Look!"

Ab looked and saw the tall grass waving in a long line near the tree-clump they had just left.

*Adventuring in Young America.* McGuire and Philips. Macmillan, 1930.

As soon as there were animals enough in the colonies to provide tallow, candles were used. The thrifty housewife carefully saved every bit of tallow and fat for making them. The winter's supply was made in the fall by the women of the family.

*After The Sun Sets.* Miriam B. Huber, Frank Salisbury and Mabel O'Donnell. Row Peterson, 1938.

Then a queer thing happened. They heard three knocks at the window.

"What is that?" asked all the children.

"It may be only the wind," said the father. "I will go out and see what it is."

*American History for Little Folks.* Blaisdell and Ball. Little, Brown, 1917.

Indians soon flocked about to see the "great white bird" as they called the Half Moon on account of her white sails. These red men had never seen a ship before, and did not know what to make of the strange visitors. They were kind to the white-faced strangers. They brought grapes, furs, and corn and traded them for beads, knives, and red coats.

*American History Stories.* Eva March Tappan. Houghton, Mifflin, 1924.

The more Leif thought of this unknown land, the more he longed to see it. "Will you sell me your ship?" he asked the sailor. "I want to make a visit to that unknown country."

*A Train—A Boat—And An Island.* Charlotte Kuh. Macmillan, 1932.

Frederick was so busy sliding down the banisters in a great big hurry to get down before the others that he didn't know anything about the secret. He dashed to his place and was sitting there, almost as if he had been there all night when his mother and father and Michael and Sarah walked into the dining room.

After they were all seated at the breakfast table Mrs. Perkins looked at Mr. Perkins and said, "Shall we tell them about the plan?"

*Beppo, the Donkey.* Rhea Wells. Doubleday, 1930.

Before they had gone far it began to rain hard. The wind blew, and the rain came down like a waterfall. The water ran down the road and Sarina and Beppo were wet to their skins. Sarina just laughed at the rain and said it was fine to be in it. It was raining so hard that they could hardly see the road. It was very muddy and slippery, and once Beppo slipped and sat down. He looked so funny sitting in the mud that Sarina had to laugh at him.

*Big Fellow At Work.* Dorothy Baruch. Harper, 1930.

But Ned had never seen Big Fellow doing these things. He had never seen the great shovel at work on any job, because, the fact was, the shovel had never yet worked on any job. It was too new.

*Billy and Blaze.* C. W. Anderson. Macmillan, 1937.

Billy was a little boy who loved horses more than anything else in the world. Whenever he had a chance to ride some farmer's horse he used to pretend that it was a prancing pony.

*Binkie and the Fireman.* Rebecca J. Coffin, editor. Picture Scripts. Edward Stern, 1936.

Binkie came to live with the fireman when he was a wee puppy. This is how it happened. One cold winter night Company 10 was called out to a fire.

*Black Beauty.* Anna Sewell. The Page Company, 1907.

Just then a horse's head looked over from the stall beyond: the ears were laid back, and the eye looked

rather ill tempered. This was a tall chestnut mare, with a long handsome neck; she looked across to me and said:

"So it is you who have turned me out of my box; it is a very strange thing for a colt like you to turn a lady out of her own home."

*Blaze and the Forest Fire.* C. W. Anderson. Macmillan, 1938.

Even as Billy looked, the flames burst out. He knew these flames were the beginning of a forest fire unless they could be put out. If a breeze came up and carried fire to the big pine trees near by, the whole countryside might burn.

*Blaze and the Gypsies.* C. W. Anderson. Macmillan, 1937.

Suddenly around a turn in the road they met a covered wagon driven by gypsies. The gypsies stopped and asked Billy many questions about his pony and his own name and where he lived.

*Chessie.* Ruth Carroll. Julian Messner, 1936.

All at once something strange happened. The floor began to shake! Chessie tried to dig her claws in, but they wouldn't go in. The floor was made of copper. She might just as well have tried to claw a shiny bath tub.

*Cinder the Cat.* Miriam Blanton Huber. American Book, 1931.

Cinder was a big black cat.

Cinder lived in a store.

Cinder had soft, black feet.

Cinder had soft, black ears.

Cinder had a long, black tail.

*Clear Track Ahead!* Henry B. Lent. Macmillan, 1934.

Clear the track! Here comes the fast freight around the curve. "Who-o-o-o! Who-o-o-o!" Feel how the platform trembles as the heavy steel wheels rush down the shining track. Hear them pounding . . . Clickety-clickety-click. The big locomotive roars by with a hissing of steam. The engineer has one hand on the throttle. He leans from the cab window, his eyes fixed on the track ahead.

*Cork Ships and How to Make Them.* Peter Adams. Dutton, 1928.

The first sailing ship about which we have any definite knowledge, dates back to 6000 years before the Christian era. When the Babylonians settled on the banks of the Nile, they proceeded to build ships that would carry them up and down the long reaches of the great river.

*Cowboy Hugh.* Walter H. Nichols. Macmillan, 1927.

After a final look around to see that he had forgotten nothing nor added a single item more than he would need, Hugh extinguished the candle flame. From the shadows of the room, he looked out into the star-

lit night upon the dull, mud roof of the stable down the slope of the hill back of the house. His horse and ranch equipment were there, arranged in order so that he might lay hands on them without need of lighting the barn lantern.

*Cowboy Tommy.* Sanford Tousey. Doubleday, Doran, 1937.

One day his father called him over and said, "Tommy, we're going out to visit your great-grandfather, so you'll get to see some Indians and cowboys."

*Diggers and Builders.* Henry B. Lent. Macmillan, 1931.

Tony must watch very carefully now! He pulls another lever and the bucket swings slowly around, over the truck. When it is just right, the truck driver waves his hand. Quick as a wink, Tony jerks the cord, and plop! the bottom of the bucket opens and the dirt falls into the truck with a loud noise.

*Doctor Dolittle's Circus.* Hugh Lofting. Stokes, 1924.

Now, Mathew Mugg was a peculiar man. He loved trying new jobs—which was one reason, perhaps, he never made much money.

*East O' the Sun and West O' the Moon.* G. T. Thompson. Row, Peterson, 1912.

He had scarcely said this before the cloth did as it was bid, and all who stood by thought it a fine thing, but most of all the landlord. So, when all were fast asleep, at dead of night, he took the lad's cloth and put another like it in its place. But this could not so much as serve up a bit of dry bread.

*Elementary Science By Grades, Book II.* Persing and Peeples. Appleton, 1928.

There are two things you must be sure to do, if you want your goldfish to live. You must not put many goldfish into one aquarium. In most aquariums, two or three are enough. If you have a very large aquarium you may have more fish. If there are too many fish in an aquarium, they will not live.

*Fifty Famous Stories Retold.* James Baldwin. American Book, 1896.

Soon he reached the farther side where his friends stood ready to help him. Shout after shout greeted him as he climbed upon the bank. Then Porsena's men shouted also, for they had never seen a man so brave and strong as Horatius. He had kept them out of Rome, but he had done a deed which they could not help but praise.

*Folk Tales of a Savage.* Lobagola. Knopf, 1930.

Just then Black Leopard saw a buck that was standing still in the bush, trying to hide. At once the Black Leopard thought: "Now I can have a buck. Later I shall come back and have a man."

*Following Columbus* W. L. Nida. Macmillan, 1923.

King Henry was greatly pleased with Cabot's dis-

covery. Much honor was shown him and he was provided with handsome clothing. The people called him the Great Admiral and ran after him like mad folk.

*Following the Frontier.* W. L. Nida. Macmillan, 1927

A wild Continent. Three hundred years ago the great country in which you now live was a wilderness, a vast uncultivated land of forests and prairies, of mountains and valleys and deserts. There were no cities or towns or farmhouses, no fruitful orchards nor productive wheat fields; there were only pathless plains and trackless forests. Instead of the honk of the automobiles and the whistle of the locomotive, and factory, one might have heard the hoot of the owl, the gobble of the wild turkey, the scream of the panther, and the howl of the wolf.

*Frawg.* Annie V. Weaver. Stokes, 1930.

It took Frawg and Buckeye and Evvaleena, all three, to lift one melon, but they lifted it up high and let it fall squash! on the ground. Then another and another, until all the rest of the melons lay broken open and seeds were spattered everywhere.

*Friendly Village.* Mabel O'Donnell and Alice Carey. Row, Peterson, 1936.

Jerry looked once. He looked a second time. He could not believe his eyes.

A goat in Mr. Andrews' garden. Mr. Andrews did not have a goat. No one in the village had a goat. Where in the world had he come from? Anyway he must stop eating sunflowers.

*From Then Till Now.* Julia A. Schwartz. World Book, 1929.

Anxiously, most of the children crowded about Kabu, who still stared toward the river. The sky had become rosy in the afterglow of sunset. The water now reflected a soft color that made more distinct the dark figures moving on the bank.

*Full Speed Ahead.* H. B. Beston. Doubleday, Page, 1919.

Guests began to come by twos and threes. Girls in pretty dresses, young army officers with wound stripes and clumsy limps.

Because I requested him, the captain told me of the crossing of the submarines.

*Full Steam Ahead!* Henry B. Lent. Macmillan, 1937.

Twelve o'clock. The deep rumble of the liner's whistle drowns out all other noises. Hum-m-m! There is no stopping it now! It will blow for several minutes. This is to let everybody know that the liner is starting, and also to warn all the small river boats to keep out of the way while the liner backs out into mid-stream.

*Green and Go'd—The Story of the Banana.* Elmer and Berta Hader. Macmillan, 1936.

Jack stared at the green bunch of bananas hanging

overhead. "I didn't know bananas grew upside down, Uncle Amos."

"And," said his twin sister Jill, "in the stores where we buy bananas they hang the other way and are yellow." The two children were visiting their uncle who was in charge of a very large banana farm in Guatemala.

*Hester and Timothy*, Pioneers. Ruth Langland Holberg. Doubleday, Doran, 1937.

Paul had shot a number of squirrels and he taught Timothy how to work and knead the skins under water after they had been stretched in the sun.

"Mine is getting soft as cloth," grunted Timothy. He worked away, turning the skin this way and that. "Does it take many skins for leggings and tunics like yours and your father's?"

*Hindu Fables*. Dhan Gopal Mukerji. Dutton, 1929.

Just then an idea came into my head. Suppose I run into Mr. James when he opens the door of my cage. I watched him for days. Each time, I noticed, the door of my cage opened outward.

*Holiday Meadow*. Edith M. Patch. Macmillan, 1935.

Sometimes they crept through the grass so slowly and quietly that Wejack did not know they were there. At least sometimes he did not know until the old crow told him.

Of course Corbie, the crow, did not say, "Look out, Wejack, two children are creeping through the grass toward your hole." All Corbie did was call "Caw! Caw! Caw!"

*Holiday Pond*. Edith Patch. Macmillan, 1930.

The old frogs did not feed the baby tads even so much as a single mosquito wriggler. The youngsters found their own food. Their legs grew on the outside of their bodies. And their arms grew on the inside, in the gill chambers. All this happened and the parent frogs paid no attention.

*Home*. Waddell, Nemec and Bush. Macmillan, 1936.

It was the night after Christmas.

Peggy and Billy had come to stay three days with their uncle and aunt.

"Your Christmas tree is beautiful," said Peggy.

"I cut it in the woods," said Uncle Ned.

"I wish you could see the woods in the winter."

Billy said, "Tomorrow may we go to the woods?" "We shall see," said Uncle Ned.

*Hoot-Owl*. Mable Giunnip La Rue. Macmillan, 1936.

"I'll watch today," said Beaver Boy one morning. "I'll find out who is smashing the pumpkins."

Beaver Boy went down to the cornfield. He hid behind a rock. Then he waited for somebody to come.

*How We Have Conquered Distance*. Bush and Waddell. Macmillan, 1936.

Man's helper, the wind, sometimes in the early days worked well for him. Sometimes it pushed his boat in the wrong way.

Besides this man could not tell ahead of time when the wind was going to blow the way he wished to go. Can you think of reasons why traders would not like this?

*Indians In Winter Camp*. Therese O. Deming. Laidlaw, 1931.

While Eagle was making the fire, some other boys caught a rabbit. They put him over the fire to cook. Soon the rabbit was ready to eat and the boys had a feast under the pine trees.

*Jack the Giant Killer*. Andrew Lang. Longmans, Green, 1913.

On the castle gate he found a golden trumpet, under which were written these lines:

Whoever can this trumpet blow,  
Shall cause the Giant's overthrow.

As soon as Jack read this he seized the trumpet and blew a shrill blast, which made the gates fly open, and the very castle itself to shake.

*Jimmie, The Story of a Black Bear Cub*. E. H. Baynes. Macmillan, 1924.

Early in the autumn there is hunting in the Blue Mountain Forest, and one evening Jimmie took part in a deer hunt. He joined a small party of hunters just as they were starting out, and they stopped for a while to play with him.

*Jimmy Flies*. Dorothy Heiderstadt. Stokes, 1930.

One hundred miles an hour! But it seemed to Jimmy that they were hanging up there in the air, and not moving at all. Nothing went past them. They saw only the sky.

*Johnny Round The World*. Andre and William La-Varre. Simon and Schuster, 1933.

One day, when we were about to start on a trip around the world, Johnny said, "I want to go, too." So we took him along. And in this book you will find the friends he made on the trip. If you look in your atlas or on your globe, you can find all the places we visited and just where these boys and girls live.

*Kintu*. Elizabeth Enright. Farrar and Rinehart, 1935.

Kintu was a little black boy who lived in Africa. He lived with his father and mother and his five brothers and sisters in a big mud hut with a straw roof, shaped like a beehive.

*Light Then And Now*. Lacey. Macmillan, 1936.

What kind of light do you read by in the evening? Do you know how long it took man to learn to make such lamps as yours? Here is the story of the first lamp. It may not be all true but it might easily be.

*Little Blacknose.* Hildegarde Hoyt Swift. Harcourt, Brace, 1929.

Little Blacknose was very happy. He was in his track, five yellow coaches behind him. More people than ever seemed to wish to ride on him today. All his top seats were taken and more people kept trying to get in. His steam was up, but still he was hungry.

*Little Eagle.* Theresa and Edwin Deming. Laidlaw Brothers, 1931.

Eagle could not walk well in the snow. He was too small. His father said, "I will make a sled. I have some buffalo ribs. I brought them with me."

*Little Lucia.* Mabel L. Robinson. Dutton, 1922.

Little Lucia had not been in the country three weeks when —snap!—she broke her leg. It didn't hurt so very much because the doctor came in a great hurry and set it and put it in a snug cast.

*Max.* Mabelle Halleck St. Clair. Harcourt, Brace, 1931.

The house stood on a hill. It was broad and low, with eaves that hung over like bushy eyebrows. In it lived Billy and Jane, their father and mother, the white dog, and the little black bear. The bear had a room of his own, which was underneath the sunny back porch where they all played.

*Midget and Bridget.* Berta and Elmer Hader. Macmillan, 1934.

Two little gray burros were special friends of Black Solomon. They always listened carefully and came close to hear his tales. On this dark night, when even the cactus could hardly be seen, he was telling them how the burros first came to this beautiful South-west country.

*Modern Aladdins and Their Magic.* Charles Rush and Amy Winslow. Little, Brown, 1927.

According to an old, old legend, the Chinese first learned to make paper by watching the wasp build her nest. The big round nest of the wasp is really made

of crisp brown paper. A Chinaman, watching the wasp one day, discovered that she took a bit of wood, chewed it into paste, and smeared it on her nest.

*Neighborhood Stories.* Thomas Atwood. Ginn, 1940.

Karl was very proud because he was just old enough to help to tend the cattle when they were feeding in the meadows. The cattle belonging to all the families in the village fed together, and a few boys at a time took turns looking after them.

*Olle's Ski Trip.* Elsa Beskow. Harper, 1928.

Then they came into a room that looked like a big carpenter's shop. Skis and sleds and chair-toboggans were being made there, and in the corner skates were being forged. The work went on with a will, and Olle, who stood a long time looking on, wished that he could make things as well as these boys did.

*One Day With Jambi in Sumatra.* Armstrong Sperry. Winston, 1934.

In the hills where Jambi lived, far from the sea, each house has its own fish pond. Here men raise fish just as they would rice and sugar cane. The pond that belonged to Jambi's father was a small one, like all these ponds. It was well stocked with thousands of fish called gurami.

*One Day With Tuktu.* Armstrong Sperry. Winston, 1935.

Tuktu helped his father load the seal on the sled. Kingmik was harnessed again. The whip cracked, and off they started. The journey home seemed to take only half the time. The dogs knew that they would soon be fed. Hunger lent wings to their heels.

*Our Wild Animals.* Edwin L. Moseley. Appleton, 1927.

W. T. Horaday tells of white-footed mice carrying their nest and a lot of seeds they had stored, from the ground, where they had been placed by one of his companions, to a buggy seat; and after they were removed again, carrying them to the same place a second time.

(To be continued)

# Unpublished Studies in Elementary School English, 1940\*

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*(Continued from May)*

**Kragh, Agnes M.**, "A Study of the Effect of the Ability to Read Upon Children's Success in Solving Reasoning Problems in Arithmetic." Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Denver, 1937.

This study was based upon the results of tests administered to 46 fourth grade children in Boulevard School in Denver, Colorado, in April, 1935. Standardized arithmetic, reading, vocabulary, and intelligence tests were used. A computation test based on the first 26 problems of the Stanford Arithmetic Reasoning test was also given. A matching test composed of the most difficult words found in the first 26 problems of the Stanford Arithmetic Reasoning test was administered.

Test results showed that the children studied varied greatly as to chronological ages, arithmetical ability, reading ability, intelligence, and knowledge of words.

Correlations computed on the tests indicated that both reasoning arithmetic and computational arithmetic are influenced to a fairly large degree by reading ability, knowledge of vocabulary, and intelligence; intelligence ranking first in importance, reading ability next, and knowledge of vocabulary next. Of all the correlations computed involving the reasoning test, the highest correlation found was between intelligence and reasoning ability; the next highest between reading ability and reasoning ability; the

third highest between vocabulary and reasoning ability; and fourth highest between computational ability and reasoning ability, showing that intelligence was the most important factor in solving reasoning problems, reading ability the second most important; and vocabulary and computational ability respectively ranking third and fourth in importance. Of all the correlations computed involving computational ability the greatest amount of agreement was found between intelligence and computation; the next largest amount between reading ability and computation; and the third largest amount between vocabulary and computation, showing that intelligence was the most influential factor in solving computation examples; reading the next most important; and vocabulary the next in importance. Other correlations indicated that intelligence was of greater importance in the solving of reasoning problems than it was in the working of computation examples. Additional correlations showed that reading ability affected computational ability less than it affected reasoning ability.

In analyzing the reasoning problems it was found that failure in certain cases was definitely due to the children's unfamiliarity with the vocabulary used. In certain other problems failure was definitely due to computational difficul-

\*A report read before The National Conference on Research in English, February 24, 1940, in St. Louis, Missouri.

ties, the latter being the more frequent. As a result of the entire study one may conclude that by placing greater emphasis on the importance of reading and vocabulary, children's ability to solve computational and reasoning problems may be increased considerably.

**Loomis, Mary Jane, "An Appraisal of a Functional Reading Program in an Elementary School."** Ohio State University, Columbus, 1939.

In this study the writer has endeavored to submit the findings of the experimental situation through a description and evaluation of current practices, and a presentation of the objective data accumulated over the nine years of the school's experimentation.

In an experience curriculum reading functions freely and fully in the whole range of developmental experience. Reading is not incidental for it is definitely nourished, supported and developed by the experiences of the group. Furthermore, reading is dependent upon a school library which supplies a rich and wide variety of reading materials selected in reference to group needs and divergent individual interests and aptitudes. Provision for extensive free reading is conceived as one of the main purposes of the school library. Independent library use, abiding attitudes, independent functioning of abilities are vital objectives of guidance, contingent on free access to rich reading resources.

The fact that all first grade children are not ready to begin reading at the same time was basic to all procedures. A sound foundation for readiness was built through guided first-hand experiences. Reading as a means of recalling and reviving experiences, extending first-hand experiences, reading to "find out," to clarify problems, to add to enjoyment

of daily living were the essential concerns in functional reading activities.

The art of guidance is difficult to describe. The teacher whose guidance initiates dynamic purposes knows how one purpose leads to another and how the achievement of a continuity of purpose can culminate in diverse expressional activities.

When guidance makes itself responsible for adjusting materials and expectations to individual growth levels and needs in a functional program, the long term results indicate that specific skills and attitudes, and all forms of didactic materials may safely be superseded by purposeful reading activities.

One regular function of the teacher in an experience curriculum is the accumulation of evidence and data to facilitate balanced growth of different individuals that constitute each class group. Such data regularly available constitute the experimental evidence used in this study. They are valid in the sense that they are actual records of reading progress in the whole experience curriculum which was not distorted for reading emphasis during the experiment.

**McAfee, Gladys, "A Group Experiment in Developing Comprehension in Oral and Silent Reading in the Sixth Grade. Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, 1937.**

The purpose of this study was to improve comprehension in reading in a group of sixth grade children. A class of 33 individuals in the Enos School, Springfield, Illinois, was selected for the experiment which extended from September 3, 1935, to May 25, 1936. The problem was to check the field of reading up to the present time, learn the disabilities and their causes, discover the skills and abilities previously mastered, and choose pro-

cedures and materials that would be helpful to each individual child.

The native ability and achievements in silent and oral reading were checked at the beginning of the term by the use of the *Kuhlmann-Anderson Intelligence Test, Grade VI.*<sup>7</sup> The *Sangren-Woody Silent Reading Test*<sup>8</sup> and Gray's *Standardized Check Tests in Oral Reading*.<sup>9</sup> The group was subdivided according to reading ability for most of the classroom work, but the *Standard Test Lessons in Reading* by McCall and Crabbe<sup>10</sup> were done by the class as a whole.

Gray's *Standardized Oral Reading Check Tests* were given five times at regular intervals from September 12, 1935, to January 7, 1936. The silent reading test was repeated at the conclusion of the period of experimentation and the scores gave evidence that with only one exception there had been a gain in comprehension. The class median gain was two years and three months.

The intelligence test was readministered near the close of the experiment and the mental age of many children had increased more than eight months that had elapsed since the initial testing.

This experiment indicated that there is a need for careful scientific diagnosis of the reading difficulties of each child and then a directed reading program in which objectives and abilities to be taught are clearly known and defined. Reading comprehension can be increased in children of various mental levels if the work is placed on a level where they may succeed and be conscious of their progress.

<sup>7</sup> Kuhlmann, Fred, and Anderson, Rose C., *Kuhlmann-Anderson Tests*, Educational Test Bureau, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1927.

<sup>8</sup> Sangren, P. V. and Woody Clifford, *The Sangren-Woody Reading Test*, Form A.

<sup>9</sup> Gray, W. S., *Standardized Oral Reading Check Tests*, Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, 1923.

<sup>10</sup> McCall, W. A. and Crabbe, Lelah M., *Standard Test Lessons in Reading*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1926.

**McDonald, Helen E.**, "A Suggested Elementary Library Book List for Small Elementary Rural Schools." Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Denver, 1937.

The purpose of this study was to formulate a suggested elementary library book list for small rural schools. The list was to serve as a guide for book selection, and to be adequate to the needs of the year 1937.

The study was a normative survey type employing the use of three lists. The first list, the master list, was made from book catalogs collected from publishers, the American Library Association and from the Colorado Educational Association. The master list was revised by checking it against previously prepared lists. A second list, the primary check list containing 1,625 titles, was checked by a jury of five librarians who ranked the titles into four levels of desirability. A composite score from the votes cast by the jury was made for each title appearing on the primary check list. The six hundred titles in the primary list which received the highest ratings composed the final check list which was ranked in the same manner as was the primary list, by a jury of ten librarians and elementary teachers. A composite score for each title appearing in the final check list was made and each title was ranked.

The complete study included the six hundred titles of the final check list with the number of votes cast, rank, price, title and author for each.

**Moore, Helen Frances**, "Small Group Instruction in Remedial Reading." Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, 1939.

The purpose of this study was to determine the improvement in reading made by children receiving remedial instruction

when grouped in small numbers according to general reading achievement.

This study reports, by means of the case study technique, the program of remedial instruction carried on with 68 children from the public schools of Phoenix, Arizona. The following tests were used in selecting the children: *Revised Stanford Binet Scale* to determine intelligence quotient; *Durrell Sullivan Capacity Test* to determine reading capacity; and *Durrell Sullivan Achievement Test*, *Gray's Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs*, and the *Iota Word Test*<sup>11</sup> to determine reading achievement. The children were grouped into classes containing from four to eight members, and each group met thirty minutes daily for a period ranging from .75 month to 7.75 months. Remedial instruction given the various groups differed in the difficulty of the materials rather than in the methods of procedure.

The findings of this study showed that children tend to improve in reading achievement when given group remedial instruction. Group instruction, as defined in this study, may even have advantages over individual instruction, such as (1) causing the child to become more independent in his work habits; (2) utilizing the child's desire to do something for someone else by letting him help another group member; (3) having more similarity to regular classroom situation; (4) enabling one teacher to help many more children; and (5) enabling each child to compare his own progress with that of other members of the group.

**Moss, Mildred Barr,** "An Evaluation of Reading Readiness Tests." Unpublished Doctor's dissertation. Rutgers University, School of Education, 1937.

This study undertakes to evaluate reading readiness tests in the light of their

<sup>11</sup> Monroe, Marion, *Diagnostic Reading Tests, Cards I, II, and III*.

contribution to the problem of readiness for reading. It undertakes to:

1. Trace the developments in the field of education and research that contribute to an understanding of the problem of reading readiness.
2. Summarize the methods offered in the past for determining reading readiness.
3. Evaluate the current reading readiness tests through experimentation by
  - a. Selecting the test or tests that have the highest correlation with the criterion under the conditions of the experiment.
  - b. Developing the regression equations, so that for any given reading readiness score the most probable reading achievement can be predicted.
  - c. Presenting tables which will predict the most probable reading achievement scores from reading readiness scores.

The writer of the study points out the following limitations of reading readiness tests: reading readiness rests upon more factors than can be reduced to a pencil and paper test; readiness for reading requires criteria of physiological, social, emotional and mental maturity; the pencil and paper readiness test evaluates specific performance and cannot evaluate the whole child.

**Rader, Elizabeth,** "Kindergarten Children's Understanding of Fourteen Prepositions." Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, 1939.

The purpose of this investigation was to gain some insight into the field of prepositional comprehension at the kindergarten level. Do children know the meanings of prepositions used in pre-

primer content? Can they discriminate between prepositional meanings? Can they use these prepositions in their conversation? These are the questions this study attempted to answer.

Fourteen prepositions bearing twenty-four meanings were selected from Miss Robert's *Concepts Contained in Thirty Pre-Primers*.<sup>12</sup> Two individual tests and one group test were then constructed to determine the child's understanding of these prepositional uses. Children who were finishing their kindergarten experience were tested, and the results were compiled.

The results showed that the children used in the study do have difficulty in using and understanding the prepositions tested. An average of twelve of the twenty-four meanings was found to be causing difficulty of understanding to some degree. Children possessing high intelligence and more advanced mental ages seemed to have more understanding of the prepositions than did those children with lower intelligence and less advanced mental ages.

**Rowan, A. H.**, "Reading Among Child Patients in Hospitals." Unpublished Master's thesis, Ohio University, Athens, 1937.

Books furnish a means of mental health and happiness to physically ill individuals by bringing them outside interests to relieve the tedium which the long hours of confinement bring. To place a book in the hands of a hospital patient has been found to be one of the best means of bringing him joy and consolation during his stay there. Reading is recognized by the medical profession to have therapeutic value. The librarian must know of the patient's physical condition, his intellectual attainments, and his interests in life.

<sup>12</sup> Roberts, Marion D., "Concepts Contained in Thirty Pre-Primers." Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Colorado State College of Education, 1938.

The study presents a survey of the literature in the field of biblio-therapy and descriptions of library services in hospital libraries in the United States.

It includes:

- (1) Excerpts from letters sent by various hospitals co-operating in the Study. These examples convey information possessing human interest.
- (2) Questionnaire with a summary of statistical data concerning letters and questionnaires.
- (3) Photographic records of library service in hospitals.
- (4) Extensive bibliography.
- (5) A list of co-operating hospitals providing library service.

**Smith, Lewis Conrad**, "Comics as Literature for Children." Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, 1938.

The purpose of this study was to determine the circulation, the appeal to children's interests, and the literary value of the comics.

The circulation of the comics was determined by writing to every newspaper that published comics for a list of the comics published in that paper.

The appearance of the following children's interests in literature was checked in each comic: action, child experience, dialect, direct discourse, excitement, human interest, humor, sense of justice, story of plot, and surprise. The comics were evaluated in terms of these interests, as well as in terms of ideas, emotions, worthy characterization, and manner of expression.

The findings showed that comics are the most widely circulated newspaper feature today. The weekly circulation is in excess of 335,000,000 separate comics. Comics do not deal with children or child experience. They contain the appeals of

action, dialect, direct discourse, human interest, sense of justice, surprise, and humor. They lack the appeals of story or plot and excitement.

Comics are not literature, nor are they a close approach to literature. They do not contain great and significant ideas. The fundamental human emotions are dealt with too sparingly; the characters are partial delineations, personifications, caricatures, types, or merely animated figures; no character in all the comics in the scope of this study is fully delineated. There is a lack of effectiveness in presentation because of too much simplicity and lack of precision in word meanings.

**Spielman, Esther**, "Adjectives and Adverbs in Spontaneous Letters of Children in Grades Four, Five, and Six." Unpublished Master of Arts thesis, Colorado State College of Education, Greeley, 1938.

The purpose of this study is to help discover the adjectives and adverbs that are used by children in spontaneous letter writing done outside of school. It is also to help discover the ways in which adjectives and adverbs are used.

The frequencies of both adjectives and adverbs, together with the frequencies of the words they modify, were tabulated. The frequency lists were compiled from 796 spontaneous letters, one list being kept for each grade level. Adjectives and adverbs were tabulated separately in posi-

tive, comparative, and superlative degrees. These letters were written by fourth, fifth, and sixth grade children in Canada, Old Mexico, Hawaii, Alaska, and forty-two states of the United States. The fifty adjectives and fifty adverbs of highest frequency were compared with both the Gates *Primary Word List*<sup>13</sup> and Horn's *Adult Writing Vocabulary*.<sup>14</sup>

The data gathered would seem to show that children use few different adjectives and adverbs in their spontaneous letter writing. Adjectives and adverbs of high frequencies are used in a great variety of ways. All but one of the fifty adjectives having the highest frequencies in this compilation are in the first thousand words of Horn's list. Only four adverbs of the fifty having highest frequencies are not in the first five hundred words of Horn's list.

Of the fifty adverbs having highest frequency, 68 per cent are in the Gates list, and about 50 per cent are in the first five hundred words of that list. About 75 per cent of the adjectives are in the first thousand words of the Gates list.

As few of the adjectives or adverbs were used in either comparative or superlative degrees, the writer suggests that these be taught at higher grade levels.

<sup>13</sup> Gates, A. L., *A Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades*, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1926.

<sup>14</sup> Horn, Ernest, *A Basic Writing Vocabulary*, University of Iowa Monographs in Education, First Series, No. 4, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, April, 1926.

# Editorial

## MOORINGS

DURING the past year, we have been engaged in proving, once more, the truth that man lives not by bread alone. Many times—always disastrously—men have demonstrated this, and later, in the foolish history of our race, forgotten it.

We cannot live without faith. If we are denied faith in the good, the beautiful, and the true, then we will put our trust in what is false, ugly, evil. But *believe* we must. And so, after the cynicism of the 1920's, the disillusionment of the 1930's, comes the hideous fanaticism of the 1940's—blind faith in false gods.

Viewing the present sad state of our world, it becomes apparent to us that young people, educated to believe in a hideous cult of arrogance and cruelty, are the efficient agents of destruction. We teachers must, therefore, ask ourselves some searching questions. Have we, in any way, contributed to this catastrophe? Might we have prevented it? Have our efforts to establish a questioning attitude resulted only in cynicism? Is it due to our teaching that the present generation's search for truth begins and ends in the exclamation, "Oh yeah"? Have we allowed immature and inexperienced individuals to establish their own standards of ethics and beauty, neglecting to teach them the standards that men have developed through centuries of living together?

We must not blame ourselves too harshly, for we, too, have been subjected to intense social pressures. But we cannot avoid responsibility, for if the past few years have proved anything, it is that

people can be shaped into almost anything an educator wishes.

But the tempest is about us. What wholesome faith can we offer children now to save them from the madness that is sweeping the world?

In other times, distressed people have taken refuge in the standards handed down to them, partly through literature. And the myths, fables, and classic and religious literature of our race, embodying the constants of goodness, beauty, and truth, have lost none of their potency. With these materials English teachers may today rebuild for children beliefs they can live by, and establish the standards for which they have so pathetic a need.

The materials at our disposal are of unequal value, but all the folk classics share one element: they are a bond with the past, and by this fact alone, reassuring. Furthermore, this classic literature furnishes a common background, and so a basis for mutual understanding. Much of it does a great deal more. The Greek myths teach such virtues as courage, self-control, hospitality, patience. Fables illustrate sharply the prudent conduct of everyday affairs. And of course, Bible stories (unfortunately excluded from public schools in many communities) possess high literary and ethical value.

Stability, faith, belief, standards to serve in a shaking world—these are what teachers must give a bewildered and spiritually homeless generation, if humanity is to outlive the present storm.

# Shop Talk

## JUNIOR RED CROSS SERVICES IN PRESENT EMERGENCIES\*

**T**EACHERS and school administrators who have worked with active Junior Red Cross groups are not surprised at the abilities of these groups to render effective service in the present emergency programs of the American Red Cross. The intelligence and resourcefulness of these young members have been regarded by some others as exceptional. The original objectives and the later developments in the program point directly to such constructive service in the programs of war relief and national defense.

Created in time of war the American Junior Red Cross program was nonetheless designed from the outset to promote educationally sound and emotionally sound activities. Its genesis is prophetic of the capacity for service of its membership today.

The United States was a nation at war in 1917 when President Wilson issued a proclamation creating the American Junior Red Cross. With the understanding of a teacher he defined the objectives and the area of the program in full recognition of capacities of children and the leadership of teachers.

The proclamation which predicted the great services of school children to our country at war concluded with these words:

"And best of all, more perfectly than through any of your other school lessons, you will learn by doing those kind things under your teacher's direction to be the future good citizens of this great country which we all love. . . .

"Is not this perhaps the chance for which you have been looking to give your time and efforts in some measure to meet our national needs?"

Two years later President Wilson issued another statement. This time he called upon school children in a nation at peace—saying, in part:

"Your education will not be complete unless you learn how to be good citizens, and the Junior Red Cross plans to teach you simple lessons of citizenship through its organization and its activities. It is your generation which must carry on the work of our generation at home and abroad and you can not begin too soon to train your minds and habits for this responsibility."

Children in elementary and secondary schools, public, private and parochial, responded to this opportunity. At home and abroad the services of members of the American Junior Red Cross have justified the faith in

their capacities and demonstrated the educational values of the program. Planned and guided by educators, the activities of membership groups have given direction and purpose to newly acquired or developing skills, talents and attitudes. A vital relationship between learning and living has been established in participating schools by providing for school children a partnership with adults in the great local, national and international services of the Red Cross. With the guidance of teachers, members plan constructive uses for classroom projects. The functional uses of learning for responsible citizenship in a democracy have been demonstrated by enlisting school children in appropriate roles as planning and participating citizens.

During the past year two opportunities were provided to members of the Junior Red Cross to participate in the war relief program of the American Red Cross. As soon as the effects of total war on civilian populations became known the American Red Cross began a program to provide supplies which would assist these tragic victims. A major part of this program was the production of garments by many of the local chapters. In the beginning this was entirely a volunteer program in which volunteer workers utilized materials supplied by the local chapter. Later certain materials were made available to chapters through the National Organization and during the coming year a considerable portion will be supplied from the National Organization or from Chapter funds retained from the War Relief Fund Drive.

In co-operation with the United States Office of Education plans were made for participation in this program by members of the Junior Red Cross. Home Economics Supervisors in states and cities and Junior Red Cross officers were notified of this co-operative plan. This program and the plans announced for the coming year provide for both classroom and out-of-school production of garments for war refugees. Insofar as they enlist classroom groups, it is understood that such participation is only by the voluntary requests of the pupils participating and it is further understood that production units are introduced at logical places in the learning sequence so that there will be no conflict with the planned educational development.

During the past year well over 50,000 garments have been produced by elementary and high school classroom groups. Fifty thousand labels for the garments

\*Prepared especially for *The Elementary English Review* at the request of the editor, Mr. C. C. Certain.

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were supplied by National Headquarters while many of the largest producing groups made their own labels. From such reports as are available there is indication that there was Junior Red Cross participation in this program in approximately 15 per cent of the local chapters. Reports received to date on plans for the coming year indicate that over 65 per cent of the chapters have planned with teachers for production of garments by school children.

Obviously some of the garments are advanced sewing projects recommended for the upper high school grades. It is believed, however, that the production of afghans, hoods, knitted wash cloths, towels and handkerchiefs are acceptable production projects for elementary school classes.

General information and instructions together with recommendations by the United States Office of Education are available from the National Headquarters of the American Junior Red Cross or from the Junior Red Cross Chairman of the local Red Cross Chapter.

When the low countries of Europe were invaded, it became apparent that the approved services of the American Red Cross could not be continued in Europe without an appeal to the public for funds for war relief. In this appeal the children of the country were given an opportunity to participate with adults. The United States Commissioner of Education and other leading school officials endorsed participation by school children provided such participation did not conflict with local school administration policies. The voluntary contributions of children were counted on the chapter quotas but reported separately. Such contributions were then credited to the National Children's Fund which for twenty years has financed domestic and foreign projects for children. Over \$200,000 was contributed to the National Children's Fund during this drive even though the appeal was made after many schools had closed for the summer vacation.

This long established Fund provided by children for

the benefit of children has again served in an emergency. After an appeal from the League of Red Cross Societies, an appropriation from the National Children's Fund was the first response in providing assistance to children in Finland. More recently the National Children's Fund provided a major share of an emergency shipment of sixty carloads of foodstuffs from Switzerland to Southern France and a similar share in a shipment of foodstuffs for children which was sent to Paris. In mid-September an appropriation of \$20,000 from the National Children's Fund was authorized to provide cottages for children made homeless by the bombardment of London.

Children in the schools of the United States will have the opportunity during the present year of providing assistance to children abroad by contributions to the National Children's Fund. All such contributions are expended directly on relief. No overhead is charged against this Fund since it operates through the effective and efficient channels of the American Red Cross and its sister societies in countries where relief is provided.

It is to the great credit of Junior Red Cross members that these generous services to children abroad have been provided without curtailing the extent of their services to their own schools, their own communities, or their own nation. They continue to act as significant citizens through appropriate social services. The patterns for such action for local, national and international activities during normal times have, however, been utilized in these war emergency programs in a manner which maintains educational and emotional soundness.

During the present school year members of the Junior Red Cross, which is the largest youth organization in the United States, will no doubt again demonstrate their ability to make constructive contributions to the American Red Cross programs for war relief and national defense.

#### Education for the Common Defense

In a letter last May, Lyle W. Ashby, Assistant Director of Publications of the N. E. A. said:

"There can be no defense for this nation, military or otherwise, unless there is a foundation defense of a strong people awake to the problems of citizenship, conservation, civil liberties, and economic justice. The greatest common defense the American people . . . can erect is a system of public education adequate to meet the problems of this democracy."

Education for the Common Defense is to be the theme of American Education Week which will be observed this year from November 10 to 16. Subjects for discussion are as follows:

Sunday, Nov. 10—Enriching Spiritual Life

Monday, Nov. 11—Strengthening Civic Loyalties

Tuesday, Nov. 12—Financing Public Education

Wednesday, Nov. 13—Developing Human Resources

Thursday, Nov. 14—Safeguarding Natural Resources

Friday, Nov. 15—Perpetuating Individual Liberties

Saturday, Nov. 16—Building Economic Security.

Materials to assist all types of schools in observing this occasion may be obtained from the National Education Association. Especially practical is a circular prepared by the Educational Policies Commission of the N.E.A. This outlines definite suggestions for local observance of Education Week. Write The National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, Washington, D. C.

**Children's Book Week**

Children's Book Week will be observed this year from November 10 - 16. The theme is *Good Books—Good Friends*.

Teachers who are seeking suggestions for observance of Book Week will find much help in the short accounts, prepared by Children's Book Week Headquarters,

of successful Book Week activities in various schools throughout the country. Book Week posters, book marks, and circulars including a Book Week newspaper for boys and girls may be purchased for a small sum from the Book Week Headquarters. Their address is 62 West 45th Street, New York City.

**CHILDREN'S OPINIONS OF NEWBERY PRIZE BOOKS**

(Continued from page 220)

*White Stag*, by Seredy, is the legend of a white deer that leads a tribe of people to a land promised them by their god. The four children who read this book seemed to like it but none of them praised it highly.

**Summary**

This report is limited to the reaction of sixth grade children from one school. Their average chronological age is 11 years and 9 months, and their average mental age is 14 years and 9 months according to the *Otis Advanced Group Intelligence Test*, Form A. Their reading according to the *Munroe Silent Reading Test*, is far above the average for the sixth grade, and the socio-economic background of the children is very good. Yet it is found that only a small number of these children are reading the Newbery Prize books and a still smaller number like those books. However certain books on the list are popular with the children. These include *The Voyage of Dr. Do-*

*little, Smoky, Caddie Woodlaw*, and perhaps *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*.

This paper is the report of the experiences of one sixth grade teacher of 150 pupils. The number of children reading the Newbery Prize books and therefore the number of written book reports handed in is so limited that no definite conclusions can be drawn.

The purpose of this paper is to report the experiences of one teacher in the hope that other teachers will be stimulated to do the same.

Most of the Newbery Prize books seem, on the whole, too literary for the average child and often also for the superior child. Better taste can be developed in children by encouraging them to read things that are a little difficult; but books must appeal to the fundamental interests of children which, for twelve-year-olds, include plot, adventure, and action, and that which is true to life.

# New Books for Boys and Girls

C. C. CERTAIN

## PICTURE BOOKS AND BOOKS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN

**The Tale of Tai.** By Evelyn Young. Illus. by the author. Oxford, 1940. 75c.

Little children will like this chubby Chinese baby in his padded coat and red tiger-bonnet. Tai loses himself at the New Years Fair in Peking, and, after some fun and some forlorn moments, finds his way home. Pictures and text are simple, straightforward, and pleasing. Good for the easy-reading and picture-book shelves.

**Too Fast for John.** By Emma L. Brock. Illus. by the author. Knopf, 1940. \$1.00.

The story concerns John's trip to California on a streamliner, comforted by a bag of lollipops and George, the porter. Miss Brock has used considerable repetition in her narrative, but children may find this amusing, especially if the story is read aloud. She sees and feels with her young hero, and writes with the candid directness characteristic of small boys.

**Lentil.** By Robert McCloskey. Illus. by the author. Viking, 1940. \$2.00.

"In the town of Alto, Ohio, there lived a boy named Lentil." So begins this excellent picture-story, thoroughly American in humor, atmosphere, character, and spirit. There is a well-worked-out story of how Lentil comes to play the harmonica, and how his skill on that instrument saves the town of Alto from acute embarrassment. The atmosphere and characters, as expressed in Mr. McCloskey's pictures, are so authentic that any Middle-westerner will identify Alto with some small town he knows, and recognize the people as his neighbors.

*The Tale of Tai.*  
By Evelyn Young.  
Oxford.



This is a delightful book—one that every American child between five and eight should have an opportunity to enjoy.

**Oscar, the Business Rabbit.** Story by Dorothy Lee Edwards. Photographs by Carroll Snell. Dutton, 1940. \$1.25.

Oscar is a true-to-life rabbit story that children will enjoy reading, and having read to them. Oscar's duties in the store, his intelligence and ready adoption of the ways of adult humans, his animal companions, all make interesting realistic reading. The photographs are more than illustrations; they are portraits of the actors. They say literally that there is no nature faking here, and so confirm what anyone who has ever owned many rabbits knows, namely, that exceptional characters and personalities now and then occur among them.

Oscar is a personality. This is why children will like both his story and his pictures.



*The Fair American.* By Elizabeth Coatsworth.  
Macmillan.

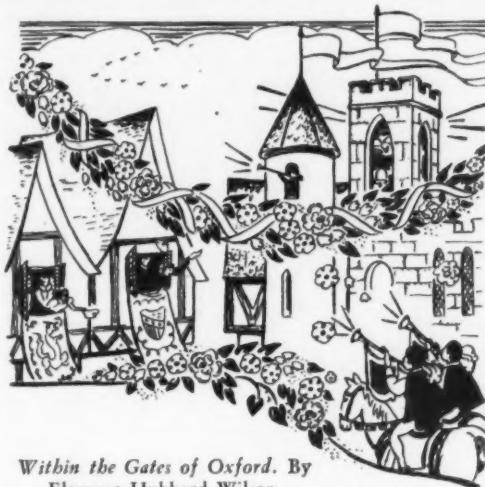
**A Summer Day with Ted and Nina.** By Marguerite de Angeli. Illus. by the author. Doubleday, Doran, 1940. 75c.

The action consists of the small doings of two children on a hot summer day. The book is designed for little children. Whether their interests will be held by the prosaic events of this tale, when they feed ordinarily on a diet of Buck Rogers, G-men, and Orphan Annie is a question, but certainly this story possesses such desirable literary qualities as cheerful realism, and rich sensory stimuli.

**Little Bo.** Story and pictures by Vera Neville. Thos. Nelson, 1940. \$1.00.

A ragged little boy and a forlorn puppy find a home with kindly Big Bindle in his shack beneath one of New York's great bridges. Eventually he and his friends come upon good fortune.

The story is a simple, frankly sentimental, rendering of the lost-child-returned-to-wealthy-parents theme.



*Within the Gates of Oxford.* By Eleanore Hubbard Wilson. Dutton.

However, the very frankness and simplicity, together with the appealing drawings, give it a gentle wonder-story atmosphere that children love. They will take the characters—Little Bo, Big Bindle, Spats the puppy, and Wilbur the horse, to their hearts, and will enjoy poring over the pictures.

**The Pleasant Pirate.** Text by John B. L. Goodwin. Pictures by Warren Chappell. Knopf, 1940. \$2.00.

The merry tale of a pirate and a genteel New England lady. Although printed as prose, the text is rhymed with Ogden Nash boldness and truly piratical disregard for the laws of rhythm. Humorous writing as good as this is all too rare. A good book for a Christmas list; it is without age limits—adults and children will both chuckle over it.

**They Were Strong and Good.** Written and illus. by Robert Lawson. Viking, 1940. \$1.50.

This is, in a sense, the Lawson family album, for it consists of pictures of the author-artist's parents and grandparents, together with brief accounts of their lives. Whereas other peoples' ancestors are usually a bore, Mr. Lawson's are not, because as he points out, this "is the story of the parents and grandparents of most of us who call ourselves Americans."

The volume would make a fine gift for a young member of the family, and a beautiful picture-story book for library shelves. It fosters a lively, because a personal, patriotism without stirring up nonsense about blue blood.

**Maminka's Children.** By Elizabeth Orton Jones. Illus. by the author. Macmillan, 1940. \$2.00.

This is a happy book, made up of a series of the small incidents of family life—visits from relatives, Bohemian Christmas customs, pets. Plot interest is almost totally lacking, but the characters, especially those of Maminka and Old Grampa, are richly alive, and the book is notable as a picture of affectionate family life. It should be read aloud to children from six to ten.

**Twin Seals.** By Inez Hogan. Illus. by the author. Dutton, 1940. \$1.00.

The author-artist catches much of the winsomeness of seals pups in her drawings. Small children will find the story exciting. One little seal is taken as a pet by an Eskimo boy. When he tries to return to his seal kindred, he finds that they have left; only his faithful twin remains. Together they return to the Eskimo village to be cared for by the boy.

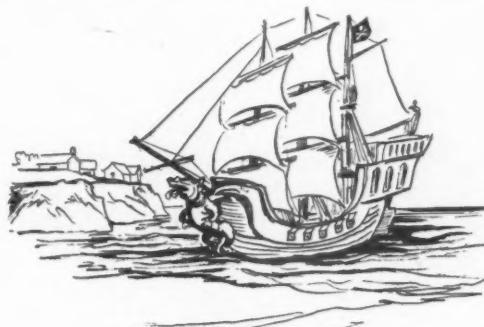
#### FOR THE MIDDLE GRADES

**Alfred, King of the English.** By Carola Oman. Illus. by E. Boye Uden. Dutton, 1939. \$2.00.

The far-off memory of a great man is brought to life by this story. The character of King Alfred is more impressive than exciting. The King is seen most vividly, perhaps, when he goes fearlessly as a minstrel into the camp of the hostile Danish King Guthrem. Alfred's companion, Denewulf, is really a more vivid character than Alfred. The story is full of interest if not of action and will be enjoyed by the older and brighter child and by the adult who knows his English history.

**The Fair American.** By Elizabeth Coatsworth. Illus. by Helen Sewell. Macmillan, 1940. \$2.00.

Mrs. Coatsworth combines a sure, firm technique with quick sensitiveness and insight. The story concerns the escape of Pierre de la Tour from France during the Terror of the French Revolution, first, through the French countryside to Brest, and thence as cabin boy aboard "The Fair American." There is enough excite-



*The Pleasant Pirate.* By John B. L. Goodwin, and Warren Chappell. Knopf.

ment to move the story along—escape from the Revolutionary mob, escape from the French frigate, the British East Indiaman and the storm. As always, Mrs. Coatsworth intersperses little poems.

**Gloucester Boy.** Written and illus. by Ruth and Richard Holberg. Doubleday, Doran, 1940. \$1.00.

Here the Holbergs write of Manuel Madieros, who lives at the top of a steep street in Gloucester. Manuel has salt in his veins, for his father was a fisherman—a fisherman who did not return from one stormy voyage. So Manuel's mother fears her son's love for the sea. Eventually, though, Manuel achieves his desire—to sail with his uncle. Many Gloucester customs are brought into the story, which is well-unified and has an exciting climax. An excellent book for children up to eleven.

**Invitation to Experiment.** By Ira M.

Freeman. Illus. with

photographs and drawings by Mae and Ira Freeman. Dutton, 1940. \$2.50.

The author, an eminent physicist, introduces the reader to the fundamental principles of science by way of experimentation. In neither laboratory paraphernalia nor terminology is Dr. Freeman exacting in his demands. Many simple experiments are described and explained so clearly that any interested person may perform them without expense or inconvenience.

The author's aim to write a book on physical science experiments to answer simply the most common questions has been well achieved. However, the avowed aim to avoid the how-to-do-it type of book is only moderately accomplished. No really good book on physics and physical science can be wholly free from the lure of things to do, and the charm of prestidigital art. The laboratory is the place where black magic and leger-de-main take their last stand. Could anything be more entertaining than to see them both appear and disappear under the wand of science?

This book should certainly be on the shelves of elementary school libraries, and in the personal libraries of boys and girls who ask "why?" of the world about them.

**Within the Gates of Oxford.** By Eleanore Hubbard Wilson. Illus. by the author. Dutton, 1940. \$2.00.

Master Martin Willowby, although a wood-carver by trade, has become the head of a band of strolling players; with him are his children, Robin and Primrose. Their luck has been bad, but they hope to mend it in the beautiful old city of Oxford. And so they do, but not at once.

The story centers around Queen Elizabeth's visit to Oxford, and is based on Elizabeth Goudge's novel,



*Mr. Songcatcher and Company.* By May Justus. Doubleday, Doran.

**Towers in the Mist.** The author has caught some of the exuberance of the Elizabethan age, and some of the charm of the city with the dreaming spires. Her attempt at Elizabethan idiom, however, is not altogether happy, although children may not find this a serious drawback.

**Mr. Songcatcher and Company.** By May Justus.

Illus. by Howard Simon. Doubleday, Doran, 1940. \$2.00.

Miss Justus knows the people of the Great Smokies well. This story concerns the search for the words of an old ballad by an outlander, "Mr. Songcatcher," and young Joe Purdy. Together they travel over the mountains to visit the numerous Purdy kin, and to take part in coon-hunts, surprise parties, and as a climax, in the Singin' Convention where Joe wins a coveted prize by singing the newly-discovered ballad.

The story is interesting for the folkways it records. The plot ties together the ballads, weather-sayings, and superstitions of the mountain people. The author is skillful in her use of mountain terms to give color to the prose.

**They Sailed and Sailed.** By Frances Margaret Fox.

Illus. by Woodi Ishmael. Dutton, 1940. \$2.00.

A fine collection of stirring tales, some of which have not been told before; others, such as that of Com-

odore Maury, Lieutenant Talbot of the "Saginaw," and that of the crew of the "Trenton," cannot be told too often to young Americans. All of the stories are valuable as character-training literature, for they tell of courage, patience, and honesty without any dreary preaching. Civics and auditorium teachers will find material here for Columbus Day, Navy Day, and other patriotic holidays. Recommended for school libraries.

#### FOR OLDER BOYS AND GIRLS

**On Safari.** By Theodore J. Waldeck. Illus. by Kurt Weise. Viking, 1940. \$2.50.

This is an account of a lifetime of Africian exploration, told with humor, compassion, and dramatic incident. The author went on his first safari at the age of eighteen, and the account of his youthful conceit and subsequent discipline is disarmingly frank and humorous. The book is built up largely of anecdotes—the story of his pet dog who drove a lion from the camp, of close calls with water-buffalo and charging elephants, of feeding a starving mother lion, of being treated by a savage doctor. Although the interest centers in big game hunting and scientific expeditions, the book is notable for the absence of all brutality.

The volume will be enjoyed by older boys and girls, whose ideals it will influence on the side of straight living. Only too rare today is the book that is highly moral without being pedantic or preachy. *On Safari* is just this.

**My Brothers and I.** Written and illus. by Alexander Finta. Holiday House, 1940. \$2.00.

This is a Hungarian Tom Sawyer whose adventures will be enjoyed by American readers. Sandor is the cen-

tral character. It is he who experiments with aeronautics and with steam engines; he organizes the club, leads their big game hunts, arranges their parades and circuses. The old-world flavor of the book in no way detracts from its vigor and interest to American readers.

A striking feature of the story is the sympathy that exists between adults and children. The father, the mother, Mr. Christmas (the landlord) all regard the boys' escapades with tolerance, if not approval.



*The Seal Twins.* By Inez Hogan. Dutton.

**Son of the Danube.** By Boris G. Petroff. Illus. by Hans Alexander Mueller. Viking, 1940. \$2.00.

This story, apparently autobiographical, concerns the boyish escapades of a Bulgarian boy. The very personal tone of the narrative in itself engenders interest. The characters are well individualized, and the opening and closing chapters are lively. Near the middle of the book, the story lags somewhat, becoming perhaps too reminiscent in tone to hold the close attention of active boy readers, but the closing chapter on the flood, has vigor and force.

**Without Valor.** By Laura Long. Illus. by Edward Caswell. Longmans, Green, 1940. \$2.00.

This should be an exciting and stirring story, for it concerns the divided loyalties of a southern Indiana town during the Civil War, and "copperheads," plots, and deserters all figure in the narrative. The author's technique seems not up to the material, however, for the book gets off to a slow start, the characters make long, explanatory speeches, and Dick, the central figure, never quite attains the force of reality. The book has value, however, as a sincere attempt to present both sides and to show the value of tolerance.



*Gaily We Parade.* By John E. Brewton. Illus. by Robert Lawson. Macmillan.

**Hill Doctor.** By Hubert Skidmore. Illus. by Benton Spruance. Doubleday, Doran, 1940. \$2.00.

Here is a highly realistic account of the difficulties faced by a young doctor in bringing medical aid to his own people in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Ignorance, superstition, and crime are all arrayed against him. The story dates back to the time when timber rights in these mountains were being bought up by powerful companies. The "yarb woman" joins the unscrupulous agent of the lumber company in opposing the young physician. He has two narrow escapes from hanging at the hands of angry natives, but gradually he gains their confidence and friendship.

Older and more intelligent children will find a great deal of meat in this book, for it is a serious sociological study of the hill people, and of professional ethics.

**River Empire.** By Helen Clark Fernald and Edwin M. Slocombe. Illus. by Eleanor Eadie and Gladys Peck. Longmans, Green, 1940. \$2.00.

A rousing adventure story for children in the upper grades. In the year 1806, Pierre Dupres sets out from a trapper's cabin near Quebec to find the men responsible for the death of his father. His search takes him down the Allegheny, the Ohio, and the Mississippi. Here he not only finds the men he is seeking, but discovers a plot to set up an independent state in the Mississippi Valley. The story touches the Aaron Burr conspiracy lightly, making another man, Murray, head of the villainous group that plans to capture New Orleans. Historians may object to this apparent whitewashing of Burr, but the authors support the story with an impressive bibliography. The authors lean a little toward miraculous escapes, incredible endurance and deeds of daring, but the story is a good one, none the less.

**Blue Horizons.** By Mary Wolfe Thompson. Decorations by Janice Holland. Longmans, Green, 1940. \$2.00.

Another in the growing series of "career books" for girls. This one is about the business of interior decorating, and the author assures us that "the decorating,

every bit of it, is honest." It is interesting, sincerely written, and skillfully combines such elements as a pleasant family life, a job, a missing heir, and a romance. A book that will appeal to girls who are beginning to think about what they want to do.

#### VERSE

**Gaily We Parade.** By John E. Brewton. Illus. by Robert Lawson. Macmillan, 1940. \$2.00.

This is a collection of poems about people—shopkeepers, relatives, neighbors, musicians. There are sections on fairies, Christmas, "funny folks," a lullaby section, a section headed "vespers."

The verses are simple and rhythmical—qualities that appeal to children. They are unusually well selected, and the book possesses that crowning virtue of anthologies—a good index. Robert Lawson, master of vigorous composition and delicate line, is the illustrator.

#### The American Mother Goose.

By Ray Wood. Foreword by John A. Lomax. Illus. by Ed. Hargis. Stokes, 1940. \$1.25.

It is high time that these folk rhymes were collected and published, for they are the genuine, spontaneous literature of America—a vanishing America, alas!

For generations, there has existed—unknown even to itself—a sort of fraternity of American children. The passwords to this society were counting-out rhymes and nonsense jingles; its secrets, American games (ante-over, club-fist, and the rest). The fraternity was in session whenever children got together at recess to play "one ole' cat" (or perhaps you called it "one-eyed cat"). But this body of childish folk-wisdom is disappearing, especially in cities and in communities where play is closely supervised.

Here, however, children may learn from a book what their grand-parents joyously learned from each other. The absurd old jingles, puzzles, and games will, an adult hopes, please and amuse them. Certainly they will find the pictures very funny. These illustrations, by the way, are unusual for their suitability to the text.





*Maminka's Children.* By Elizabeth Orton Jones. Macmillan.

#### RECEIVED TOO LATE TO CLASSIFY

**A Son of the First People.** By Adelaide Arnold. Illus. by Loren Barton. Macmillan, 1940. \$2.00.

The story of an Indian boy of Southern California. Written with skill and sympathy. For children 10-14.

**The Lost Locket.** The Newburyport of 1830. By Ethel Parton. Illus. by Margaret Platt. Viking, 1940. \$2.00.

This is one of a series of children's books covering the first half of the nineteenth century, all with Newburyport as a setting.

**At the End of Nowhere.** By Florence Crannell Means. Illus. by David Hendrickson. Houghton Mifflin, 1940. \$2.00.

A small Colorado town in the early 1900's. For upper-grade girls.

**Flight 17.** By Henry B. Lent. Illus. by Doris and George Hauman. Macmillan, 1940. \$1.00.

"Today we are going to fly from New York to Chicago . . . This trip is called Flight 17." Written for young readers, but older children will like the subject matter and style. Good for retarded readers in upper grades.

**Landlubber.** By Ledar Larsen. Illus. by Worden

Wood. Macmillan, 1940. \$1.75.

A story of modern whaling for older boys.

**He Went with Christopher Columbus.** By Louise Andrews Kent. Illus. by Paul Quinn. Houghton Mifflin, 1940. \$2.00.

This author knows how to tell an exciting yarn. This one concerns a young English boy who sailed as deckboy on the "Santa Maria." For the middle and upper grades.

**Felicia, the Curious Cow.** Told and illus. by Josephine de Witt. Nelson, 1940. \$1.50.

The inside story of how the cow happened to jump over the moon. Gay nonsense, large type, and very funny pictures.

**Blue Willow.** By Doris Gates. Illus. by Paul Lantz. Viking, 1940. \$2.00.

Janey Larkin is the ten-year-old daughter of migratory workers in the San Joaquin Valley. This account of one family's struggle against the degrading effects of their almost hopeless poverty makes an unusually good story for girls in the middle grades.

**The Year of Jubilo.** By Ruth Sawyer. Drawings by Edward Shenton. Viking, 1940. \$2.00. Lucinda, of *Roller Skates*, at fifteen.

**The Merry Matchmakers.** A story of Sweden. By Eva M. Kristoffersen. Pictured by Hedvig Collin. Albert Whitman, 1940. \$2.00.

A gaily-illustrated account of a family's business venture. Both author and artist are thoroughly acquainted with Scandinavia.

**Edward MacDowell and His Cabin in the Pines.** By Opal Wheeler and Sybil Daucher. Illus. by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton, 1940. \$2.00.

Another in these authors' excellent series of biographies of great musicians.

**Safety for Sandy.** Story and pictures by Vera Neville. Nelson, 1940. 75c.

For very little children. Many large drawings. The text emphasizes health and safety habits.

**Peterkin.** Written and illus. by Elaine and Willy Pogany. McKay, 1940. \$1.50.

Peterkin is a mischievous little faun. Both text and drawings are whimsical. Peterkin himself is an appealing, even though naughty, little fellow.



*The American Mother Goose.* By Ray Wood. Stokes.

**Bippy.** By Elizabeth Downing Barnitz. Illus. by the author. Nelson, 1940. \$1.00.

A Christmas story for little children.

**Tales of a Swiss Grandmother.** By Frances Carpenter. Illus. by Ernest Bieler. Doubleday, Doran, 1940. \$2.50.

A collection of Swiss folk-tales, illustrated by an artist of Switzerland.

**A Conch Shell for Molly.** Written and illus. by Lucille Wallower. McKay, 1940. \$2.00.

A little girl's life on a canal boat in 1885. Story is excellent, but illustrations are poorly drawn in some cases.

#### PICTURE MAPS

**Map of Great Adventures.** By Paul M. Paine, 1928.

R. R. Bowker. \$2.00.

Great adventures are almost too numerous to be shown successfully on one map. The cartographer has done well, considering this limitation. The Mediterranean is labeled "Sea of Ulysses and Jason;" the Gulf of Mexico, "Pirate Coast." Of course there are many necessary omissions, and a few that seem unnecessary. Where, for example, are the voyages of Sir Francis Drake? Where those of Vasco de Gama? The emphasis on Lindberg's flight "dates" the map.

#### LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

(Continued from page 234)

for Chico and his mother. The story of Chico's silver shop and his ambition to become an artist in silver will prove entertaining and wholesome reading. Mexican setting.

**White, William C. Mouseknees.** Illus. by Avery Johnson. Random House, 1939. Grades 4-6.

As table boy at a hotel on the West Indian island of Tobago, Mouseknees of the inquiring mind is led into many difficulties.

**Wilson, Eleanore Hubbard.** *The Magical Jumping Beans.* Illus. by the author. E. P. Dutton, 1939. Grades 4-6.

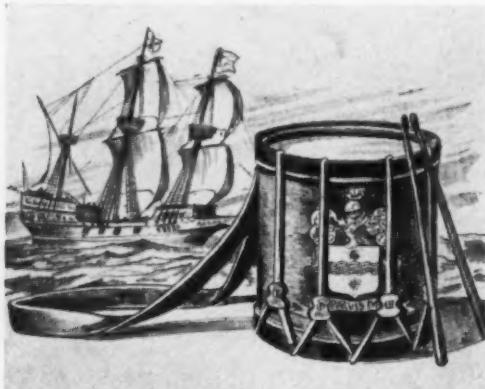
Betto dreams and with the aid of his magical jumping beans re-lives the principal

epochs of Mexico's colorful and exciting history. This story combines narrative fiction with historical facts.

**Woodward, Stacy and Horace.** *The Adventures of Chico:* A small Mexican boy who has many animal friends. Pictures by the author. Stackpole Sons, 1938. Grades 3-6.

Little Chico, who lives in an isolated cabin, is lonely until he makes friends with the animals of the vicinity. He saves them from many dangers and is rewarded in a surprising manner. Replete with actual photographs of native Mexican animals. A book that is unique in its choice of subject-matter. There is a current movie version of this story.

(To be continued)



*They Sailed and Sailed.* By Frances Margaret Fox. Dutton.